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THE
LOST SHIP

BY
THE AUTHOR OF "CAVENDISH"



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LONDON : BROADWAY, LUDGATE HILL
NEW YORK : 416 BROOME STREET

CAPTAIN NEALE'S NOVELS.

CAVENDISH.

THE LOST SHIP.

THE PRIDE OF THE MESS.

THE CAPTAIN'S WIFE.

WILL WATCH.

THE FLYING DUTCHMAN.

GENTLEMAN JACK.

THE FORT ADMIRAL.

THE NAVAL SURGEON.

THE LOST SHIP.

CHAPTER I.

“By this account then Margaret may win him,
For she's a woman to be sought for much.
The match is made.”

SHAKESPEARE.

“AND pray, sir, may I ask where this paragon of loveliness is to be found?”

“You may ask, and welcome; the question is not of the slightest use.”

“Why, on that point we may have a difference of opinion.”

“Oh, certainly, we may have a difference of opinion; but my reason for being so positive is this—she lives with her father, who keeps her mewed up in the most extraordinary manner. They have very few servants. The father never permits the daughter out of his sight; and, for fear that his vigilance should not be sufficient he does not even ramble to enjoy a walk without carrying his child and a witch of a duenna with him.”

“And pray, sir, may I ask if these are your only reasons for deeming it impossible to get acquainted with the lady?”

“Why, truly, Mr. Herbert, they appear to me sufficient to stand effectually in the way of most men; but, for fear you should want any more formidable barriers, I may mention to you the fact that her father is one of those narrow-minded Englishmen who seem to think the earth itself too small to set a limit to their pride, and ice too warm in temperature for their manner. Not one single acquaintance has he ever formed throughout the whole extent of the country. Nobody visits him, therefore nobody can give you an introduction.”

“Oh, if that be all, that's nothing. I will venture to wager my favourite horse against your small yacht that I'll ride over to the lake near to which this queer fish has settled, and, within six suns of reaching his latitude, I will undertake to have eaten at his

hearth, slept under his roof, and become acquainted with both himself and his daughter."

"Well, sir, the odds are not very equal—your horse against my yacht; neither am I much given to getting astride any such unsteady cattle. But, as I know your undertaking to be much nearer an impossibility than you have any means of judging, I say agreed: and, if you can carry off the girl for a wife, by all accounts you will wed one of the wealthiest women in this part of the Union, though you would not think so to look at the father's house, which the crack-brained old fellow will keep, at least on the side nearest the road, as like to an alehouse as can be."

"Remember distinctly that no part of my intention, and no part of my undertaking, relates either to carrying off or making love to the daughter. This beauty, remember, is of your making out, not mine. I know pretty well before I see her that neither she nor any other woman is very likely to come up to my notions, which I admit, are rather extravagant—that is, any woman now alive," added the young speaker, suppressing something like a sigh as he said this; "and, as to money, the little I want I possess three times over."

"Well, Mr. Herbert, that is of course a matter of feeling. All I can say is, you must indeed be extravagant in your notions if 'the beauty of * * *,' as she is called, fails not only to come up to the mark, but to go a long way the other side of it too. Everybody thereabouts, I can tell you, is ready to uphold her as one of the most lovely girls the sun ever shone upon."

"Well, I do not wish to say anything that may disparage their taste; but I fancy I have seen too great a beauty in my day to form that estimate of a mere little rustic."

"Rustic! I never beheld such features or expression elsewhere in my life; and though, to be sure, I cannot answer for the mind being equal to the face, as I did not speak to her, only seeing her from a distance, as it were, two or three times; yet all the grace that education could give she appeared to me to possess. This was not only my own impression, but was the report of every one who was likely to have any knowledge upon the subject."

"You seem to have made some particular inquiries, then."

"Inquiries! that beautiful countenance, sir, cost me a whole summer of scheming and contriving how I could get an introduction. The loss of a mere summer I should not have cared about, had I not been obliged ultimately to give up my object in despair."

"Well, I confess I am glad you did that."

"Why, sir?"

"Because there will be the greater glory for me when I succeed."

"Oh, is that all!"

"No, that is not all; the conclusion won't come until I have the pleasure of taking a sail in your yacht."

"Or you ride your horse down to my door, and leave it there with your compliments."

"Not much fear of that, sir; but this I promise, in order to show you that you have fallen into the hands of a generous victor, as I do not set much store by the lady's charms myself; but, as it appears you really do, I shall be very happy to make love on your account, though I cannot undertake to do it on my own; and so, when I have once completed the introduction to begin with, I shall next be able to extend it to you."

"Your generosity is very remarkable, sir. However, is it to be a wager, or not, Mr. Cherbury, now you know the whole difficulties?"

"Difficulties! I have heard of none yet. I have too great a regard for your yacht to make the least demur to the wager. When we join the ladies at tea we will reduce it into writing; and, as I am an idle man, and no one more open to an adventure, for one point only I stipulate—this undertaking shall be kept so far to ourselves, that the worthy old father shall not be put on his guard against me."

"Oh, that of course."

"But there is another point," said the gentleman in whose house and at whose dinner-table this conversation had taken place, and who had hitherto remained silent; "I beg to suggest that, if this wager is really to be made, it had better be reduced into writing before we join the ladies, and no further allusion made to it."

The propriety of this suggestion being conceded on all sides, two papers were laid on the dessert table, the master of the house drew up the wager according to the terms on which it had been settled; both the contracting parties having signed it, left the whole in his care and keeping, in case that any future reference to it should be necessary, and then, with many a laugh, first at the expense of one and then the other wagerer, the party, consisting of six gentlemen, repaired to the drawing-room.

CHAPTER II.

"Most freely I confess, myself and Toby
Set this device against Malvolio here.
How with a sportful malice it was followed,
May rather pluck our laughter than revenge."

Twelfth Night.

BEFORE I proceed further in my narrative of those singular and remarkable events which must yet be so fresh in the minds of all connected with them, it may be as well to offer some little explanation touching the speakers, whose conversation was reported in the last chapter.

The young man who took the bet in a style so intimately bordering on the confines of impudence and romance, had served, and not without some distinction, as a lieutenant in the American navy. He had scarcely arrived at the age of four-and-twenty when the death of his adopted parent left him in possession of a gentlemanly independence, and sufficient wit to prefer half-pay to full. Little was known, either by himself or others, as to his parentage. As an infant he had been adopted by an old gentleman connected with the house of Pembroke of England, and was generally believed to have been a foundling. His benefactor had given him the name of Herbert, and a sufficient fortune to do it honour; and our hero, after his friend's death, meeting with the opportunity of purchasing a fine estate in Pennsylvania, gave to it the name of Cherbury, and thus rejoiced in the appellation of Mr. Herbert of Cherbury.

It is true that there was a little vanity in this; but that is pardonable at such an age; for, after all, the emotion is a complete endemic of its kind; and few persons pass the intervening years between twenty and thirty without coming in for a touch of the complaint, with as much certainty as brings small-pox and the measles. For the cure of this afflicting disease, several modes of vaccination have come into use, and are prescribed by various practitioners. Dr. Woodroffe recommends the Insolvent Court for rapidly taking the complaint out of the system; while my esteemed contemporary, "D'Israeli the Younger," for whose Vivian Grey I have so great an admiration and respect, seems to think that the House of Commons is the more severe remedy of the two.

But, however, to return from these improper discussions. Herbert of Cherbury, notwithstanding the dash of vanity to

which we have alluded, offered in his character many sterling points that well justified his friends in the esteem they had for him. Afloat he was a clever, ingenious, gallant officer, always ready to meet any emergency with a resource, and every enemy with a keen blade. Generous, impetuous, sensitively alive to all the nobler impulses of our nature, equally ready to resent an insult and to forgive an injury, it followed, as a matter of course, that he had always been much loved by his men, as well as petted by his brother officers; and this had given to his manners an occasional boldness and resolution, in carrying out the object he desired, that often approached to impudence. In person Herbert was rather tall, standing about five feet eleven, slightly yet strongly made, and wearing on his features the bold, confident air of a man who has been too often placed in peril, and too often relieved from it by his own unaided energies, not to feel the most perfect reliance on himself. Yet, with all this, there was a dash of melancholy in his features, which Nature, in her inevitable apportionment of our destiny, appears to have given in early life to those who, in some after day, are to feel the pressure of heavy trials or deep sorrows, of which we may say two of the most memorable instances on record are the cases of Charles I. and Napoleon, besides a host of others that might be brought to support the observation.

There was also in Herbert's manner, when not in the exclusive company of man, a peculiar softness and gentle bearing that bespoke the fact of his not only having been much accustomed to the society of women, but to his taking great delight in it, while a certain air of romance was traceable throughout his whole temperament and disposition; and though it did not prevent his manifesting, on every occasion, a most sincere and perfect love of truth and candour, yet perpetually enlisted his sympathies on the side of suffering and novelty, besides involving him at every step in a series of adventures which would have happened to no other man, unless similarly constituted. Finally, as we have seen, there was some curious sort of mystery connected with Herbert's birth, of which no one—not even he himself—knew the whole truth, that completed the sort of hero-like character accorded to him.

On the day on which this story opens, Herbert had gone to dine with a friend in the city of New York. By one of those extraordinary accidents which do occasionally occur in civilized society, the conversation had temporarily quitted the interesting topic of dollar-making, and the prospect of the cotton crops, to wander to that of beautiful women. This subject was no sooner started than a pale young gentleman, who had hitherto been silent, who had a fine estate in South Carolina, and was rarely moved by any business topics, except the "ris in rice," "negro emancipation," and "the right of search," now came forth resplendently.

All the charms that ever were attributed to Helen were trifling compared to those which this enamoured youth described as having lately seen on the banks of the * * *. It seems he had repaired

to that neighbourhood on a visit to some friend, and, during a fishing excursion, had caught a glimpse of this divinity, whose exquisite personal loveliness all his efforts had proved unavailing to banish from his remembrance.

The "stricken deer" had at first wisely tried to fly—the only safe remedy that ingenuity has ever yet devised for Love's sweet wounds, and then not effectual unless vigorously pursued at the very moment of the infliction. The forked arrow had, however, rankled too deeply in the rice-grower's side to permit his following such a course. Again and again he had returned as far within the range of young Love's shafts as he possibly could; namely, just near enough to be touched to the very quick, but certainly much too far off to have the least chance of healing his torments by any of the rust of the barb that had entered his soul.

He now condescended to think of an introduction, quite convinced that the rustic girl, who had passed her life remote from cities, as well as the father, who thought fit to live in a dwelling of the true cottage style, a building which had primarily been a roadside alehouse when he first purchased it, and still bore a wondrous resemblance to its original on one side, would both be delighted to jump at the possession of a thin exquisite youth, with flaxen hair and endless plantations, to say nothing of splendid rice-swamps and ear-notched negroes.

Wondrously to his surprise and mortification, however, further inquiry on this interesting topic soon displayed the reverse, namely, that the father was some rich, eccentric exile from the shores of England, why or whence nobody knew; who already possessed more acres than he chose to be troubled with, and detested a slave-owner as he did the devil, to say nothing of his utterly secluding himself and his daughter from all intercourse with his neighbours; so that no one could have given "the pale-face" an introduction, even if they wished it.

After, therefore, gazing at the beauty for some months in her daily walks, and rides, and boatings, with her parent and duenna, the innamorato, who had no ability to overcome obstacles of so serious a nature in the path of his affections, contented himself with trying to believe that the father was mad, and that the daughter would be so, and, in short, that the grapes were sour; and so withdrew to his usual amusements of yachting and idling, which latter he dignified with the title of "improving his estates."

It was fortunate that he entertained no further hopes of obtaining the beauty of * * *, or, certainly, he could not have taken a more unlikely method of gaining his desires than that of mentioning the existence of his idol to a gentleman of Herbert's temperament.

Young, clever, and enterprising, the latter was as expressly formed to succeed in such a matter as Mr. Webber, the Carolina youth, was the reverse; nor, on the other hand, must it be

supposed that Herbert, when he so decidedly announced the impossibility of his becoming attached to the fair unknown, ventured such assertions from any spirit of coxcombry, since the real truth of the case stood thus: Herbert, not three years before, had been engaged to the lady of his first love, who really had possessed great personal charms, which he naturally had as greatly magnified; and the object of his attachment having unfortunately perished at sea a few weeks before their proposed union, Herbert, with the mistaken inexperience of extreme youth, imagined that no second person in the world existed capable of reviving those intense feelings of adoration which had recently undergone so severe a bereavement—as if the same qualities that force the heart to love once, must not at all future times command its allegiance, and, still more, as if it were likely that Nature should confine such ample gifts to one or two solitary individuals out of the millions of her children.

With this short insight into the past history of the leading characters of the following tale, the course of the story may proceed.

CHAPTER III.

“Who keeps the gate here? Ho! where is the earl?”

SHAKESPEARE.

THE American autumn was just at its height, when Herbert arrived on the tranquil shores of the * * *, where that majestic stream first issues from the broad bosom of the lake. Reining in his steed as the road descended towards the water, the rider paused upon a knoll of ground, across which were thrown the massive shadows of several noble hemlocks, which shot up into the heavens like true pillars of the earth, supporting a heavy mass of dark foliage, and permitting the eye to glance through their enormous stems at the expanded sheet of water where the parent lake presented its fair face to heaven, dimpling and laughing in the joyous breeze of morning, and catching from the azure vault above the loveliest tint of blue the mind of the poet can conceive or pencil of artist imitate.

An exclamation of delight burst from the lips of our hero as his delighted eye first glanced on this beautiful picture, framed in a glorious setting by the splendid wood around him, while the vast but distant mountains seemed to lie in indolent repose, faint, dim, and magnificent in the distance. A gentle tremor of the clear and liquid ether was perceptible to the sight, as the sun's

fervid rays, by causing the air to undulate in its rise, appeared almost to give the glee and life of a dance to the inanimate objects, which might well be supposed to rejoice in the beauty and luxuriance of the hour.

A little in advance of Herbert, on his right hand, stood a humble kind of cottage. It was a queer, odd-looking building, and, to the eye of most men, would have worn the aspect of a rude species of hostel. Even as it was, there still remained on its front wall the marks where, at some former period, that substitute for the vine-bush, a publican's sign, had been suspended for the consolation of the weary traveller.

This had been removed, it is true, but not with any very great care; nor had peculiar pains been bestowed on effacing one or two other less positive marks of the public nature of the former destiny of the house. There still remained appended to it a wide, old-fashioned porch, with stone seats on either side, very much adapted to the sort of day we have been attempting to describe, more especially if accompanied by a flask of Montepulciano, a hookah of the best Kanaster, and a Dutchman's point of session. There still also remained, not far from the house, a flight of stone mounting-steps, which had assisted many a worthy matron to mount the horse which bore back to her farm divers articles of finery, tea, &c.

"I think this must be the spot," said Herbert, half aloud, as he looked round once or twice; "and, at any rate, there is no fault in the taste that selected such a site, for few more beautiful have presented themselves in the whole of the ride, nor is it likely that there should be two such queer-fashioned looking kennels possessing the same bearings. This must be the house; but, however, I see no one stirring in it, though that is no argument either way; at any rate, I'll put it to the test. If he is at home, I must make the best of it; and, if he is out, I do not see that I can make any better. Now, let me see—what was the part I was to play?"

Here Herbert paused, in his low, muttered conversation with himself, as if reflecting, and then presently added—

"Well, I don't think I can mend that plan, so I'll e'en adopt it. And now, old Breakneck," patting his horse familiarly on the shoulder, "you shall see some acting that would not disgrace the Park Theatre, and might, perhaps, even pass muster on the famed boards of the old country."

Then, as if the speaker's mind were fully resolved, he slackened his rein as a signal to the noble charger that he rode to move forward—a hint most speedily obeyed; for in two or three bounds both man and steed paused opposite to the porch we have mentioned. Here, in the loudest voice he could command, and with every appearance of a *bonâ-fide* traveller, Herbert commenced shouting,—

"Hey there, Mr. Landlord! House ahoy! Holloa, there,

within! Fire! thieves! and the enemy! Is there no one to answer an honest man, and noon scarcely past his broad manhood?"

No answer was returned to these interrogations; and Herbert, who had been for some minutes agitating the front door by its apology for a handle, without succeeding in gaining any attention, waited patiently for the space of a few seconds; and after making the neighbouring woods resound to a pair of most indubitable lungs with repetitions of the aforesaid cry of "House ahoy!" &c., without any beneficial result following, slowly walked his steed round the building, to see if any less guarded portal presented itself; but though there evidently existed other buildings behind, they were enclosed and inaccessible.

In a few minutes both steed and rider once more made their appearance in front: the search had been a fruitless one.

"By St. Jago de Cuba!" exclaimed the stranger, striking the door heavily with the massive silver butt of his horsewhip; "the man does not live that foils us often, does he, good Breakneck? By leave of your heels, we will have an entry here whether or no, if my name is Herbert of Cherbury."

As the speaker thus communicated his intentions to his horse, a slight motion of his hand brought the animal immediately in front of the house, and fairly before the door, at about three feet from it; the ingenious Herbert then slipped his fingers beneath the short ribs of the steed under his flank. Away flew the powerful heels of his charger, and the front door of "mine host-that-was-to-be," with a sound that re-echoed through the nodding wood on the other side of the river, broke into fifty splinters.

"Thanks, Breakneck, my boy; I know no one more hospitable in another man's house than yourself; we shall have less difficulty now in getting something to fodder us both."

As Herbert said this, he struck a few more blows with his hand-whip, which seemed expressly formed for the operation, upon the already shattered portal, and in a few minutes had entered the threshold: unbolting and opening back the shattered door-frame, he passed the two rooms on either side, entered the kitchen, and, coolly leading in his horse after him, hung the bridle of the latter carelessly on the key of a rude cupboard, raked together very carefully the embers of the fire, which had been getting rather low, and which he now, therefore, replenished with fresh fuel, and this done, began to look about him.

CHAPTER IV.

"Well, I doubt not to die for all this, if I 'scape hanging. Give me my horse—give me a cup of sack, rogue—is there no virtue extant?"

SHAKESPEARE.

NOR was this all. With a degree of facetiousness that must have been highly relished by the real owner of the house, could he have heard it, this tenant-at-will commenced with himself the following dialogue:—

"Pray, Mr. Herbert, may I ask what you would like to take for dinner?"

"Oh, don't make yourself at all uneasy, landlord; anything that you have in your house, from a simple dinner with four courses up to stewed tench, turtle, truffles, and champagne."

"Thank you, sir; I am much obliged to you for your kind, accommodating spirit; perhaps you will have no objection to help yourself?"

"Why, landlord, I am a modest, retiring man; but, if you particularly desire it, I will try. What have we overhead, a side of bacon?—my compliments to you, Sir Pig! We will be more intimate anon. You will excuse me, Mr. Landlord, but I attend to my horse first, and myself afterwards; and Breakneck's coat at present will be slightly better for rubbing down. You have no objection to my cutting the towel from behind the kitchen-door, I suppose?"

"Oh, pray make yourself at home, sir; I should be sorry to see you under any restraint in my house."

"Thank you, landlord, thank you; I thought you were a man of that temper the moment I entered."

Here the modest Mr. Herbert, for a brief space, was content to cease his conversational amusements for those of a more active character. Taking up a large knife that lay on the table, he cut down the coarse cloth that had been hung on the roller, twisted the linen up into a wisp, and commenced rubbing down the horse that had just rendered him such essential service in the board and lodging department.

To all appearances, the horse was made completely for the master, for he stood as quiet, and took everything as coolly, as if he had always been tethered near the spot from the first hour of foaling, now and then casting a casual glance round his new quarters, as if to say, "May I ask the situation of the meal-bin in these parts?" Thus also did the ceremonious Herbert appear to translate the

creature's looks, as, in the middle of his operations, he replied to them, by saying :—

"Ay, ay, Breakneck, I'll find it for you ; I have a touch of the same complaint that wants remedying, so don't be alarmed."

A loud neigh was here given, as if in answer to this assurance, and the rider, having cast loose the saddle-girths, applied himself, without more ado, to the redemption of his word.

By this time the fire was blazing up merrily. Herbert, with the same disdain of punctilio that had hitherto marked his progress, very soon found out the breadpan, and, cutting in two a large loaf, he scooped out the contents of the crumb, seized a huge bowl, apparently used for holding milk, broke into it the soft bread, added some hot water from the hearth, and a pint of milk which stood at hand, and then cut into the mess a bunch of carrots which was lying near, sprinkled two or three pinches of salt, giving the whole a good stir round, and then set the dish before the steed, saying,—

"There, Breakneck, that is the best part of your morning's meal for the present ; thank the gods for the dainties they provide, and fall to. I am sorry I cannot ask you to take a chair, but I shall be happy to remove your bridle. There, now you are at liberty and served, I'll assist myself."

Mr. Herbert seemed a man not unlikely to redeem his promise, from all we have been able to ascertain of his character. So, speedily setting to work with the side of bacon hanging over his head, half a dozen handsome rashers were cut, and forthwith graced the embers ; as many eggs simmered above them ; butter-milk and the crust of Breakneck's loaf figured on the table beside him, and the worthy officer—for no man who had not been reared within the smell of powder would have been likely to take things so coolly—bestowed his whole energies upon the duties of mastication.

In the course of half an hour, we trust it is no libel to say that both horse and man had pretty well despatched all that had been set before them, when the latter, stretching his legs out carelessly towards the fire, and throwing his head and arms back, indulged in a hearty laugh, saying as he did so,—

"I wish, Breakneck, our friend had left the key of his grog at home ; this drinking milk is sorry work, is it not ? A quart of ale now for you, and a bottle of sherry for myself, had been more to our fancies : what say'st thou ?"

The horse here approached his master, and, leaning its head over his shoulder to be caressed, looked knowingly round as if in search of the article desired. For some time the master seemed to amuse himself by watching the motions of his steed, and then suddenly put this pithy question, apparently to the animal, but in reality, by the loud tone of voice he used, to any one who might be within hearing.

"Breakneck, my boy, which do you think is the best man of the

two, the landlord here or your master? because it strikes me a great deal may turn upon that point: still, if a man will keep a house for the benefit of the public, and won't stay at home to render them accommodation, ought he to be surprised if the public accommodate themselves? Well, at any rate, be he as big as a mountain, or as strong as Goliath, at the very worst, Breakneck, he can only give your master a thrashing, and that will be a novelty, if it has nothing else to recommend it. The sun is very hot to-day; I wonder if this fellow has got any good bedrooms in his house—I'll see; a nice siesta now will calm one's mind for the approaching squall, when old Sour-Crout comes home from market or shooting, or where the devil he has gone to, and finds that he has got two lodgers more than he expected;" then, in a lower voice, he added, as he leaned his head close to his horse's ear,—“Considering the obstacles so prated about by young Rice-skin, I think we have not done amiss, eh, Father Breakneck? We certainly have crossed his threshold, and eaten at his hearth; let me only persuade my wide-awake eyes to go to sleep for ten minutes before the worthy proprietor returns to indulge me with a hearty row with him, in which, by hook or by crook, it will be hard if I do not make his daughter's acquaintance somehow or other, and then my wager is won. Let me see—I must be back in New York by the day after to-morrow. I shall have gained young Rice-skin's yacht, and he will have gained a vast deal of experience: so it shall be, then.”

Putting on and tying up Breakneck's bridle, so that he could not get away, the modest Mr. Herbert deliberately counted the stairs, and proceeded to search for the sleeping apartments. Having taken the first door to the right hand, Herbert entered a small room—rude, it is true, in its construction, but scrupulously neat and clean. A very few minutes' observation of the various elegancies—humble as they were in their way—laid out upon the toilet-table, convinced the spectator that he was intruding on the sanctuary of one of the fair sex. With a hastiness of conclusion not unnatural, though erroneous, he supposed this to be the chamber of his host's daughter, and, displaying a feeling of reverence that might hardly have been expected from some parts of his former conduct, he exclaimed,—

“Well, poor girl, at any rate, we will do nothing that will annoy her, though I am not likely to be any great admirer of her rustic charms; and, certainly, finding a rough animal asleep on her bed with his boots on might be apt to shock even a forest damsel's nerves, so I'll take myself off to the old chap's quarters. Raising one of the pillows to his lips, in a way sufficiently reverential to have pleaded powerfully in mitigation of his intrusion, had she whom he supposed to be the fair owner of the spot been able to see the act, he then stole quietly on tiptoe out of the room, closed the door, and without further ado entered that opposite. The inspection here seemed far less

pleasant, and was therefore, we suppose, infinitely more brief. Throwing himself hastily down upon the spotless quilt, Herbert crossed his boots very leisurely and closed his eyes with the air of one determined to sleep under any circumstances for a few seconds.

Any hidden spectator would for some time have imagined that so much virtuous resolution had been rewarded with success, the intruder lying stretched upon the bed as perfectly silent and motionless as if he were really in a deep slumber. This was not so, however; suddenly starting once more to his feet, Herbert exclaimed,—

“Confusion take the old vagabond! It is impossible to manage it here on this bed, at any rate; I can bring myself to think of nothing but odious beards, frizzled whiskers, and rough faces; but over the way the case will be quite different—there one’s ideas, in spite of oneself, will of course take the most delightfully rosy line! Visions of youth, fair and exquisite as the morning, must entrance our senses, and I shall fall to sleep in an ecstasy of delight; but I am afraid she will think it so unkind, so very uncere- monious. Still a bet’s a bet; let we win that first, and I must try to make my peace for my rudeness afterwards; and, if not, why she will only think me a savage—yes, I must give way to the temptation.”

Marching out of what he concluded to be the father’s room, the door of which he now left open, this scrupulous reasoner upon appearances placed a chair by the side of the lady’s couch, so that he might not be found with his feet resting on the snowy furniture, then lying gently down, and clasping one of the before-mentioned pillows to his lips, reality succeeded to imitation, and he was soon lost in oblivion of everything around him.

CHAPTER V

“Sweet earl, divorce not wisdom from your honour.”

SHAKESPEARE.

IN this repose Herbert might have lain for about an hour, when the eccentric and misanthropic owner of the violated house returning, beheld, with emotions of unutterable surprise and rage, the somewhat singular condition of his front door.

It must be admitted, that, whether in town or country, there are few gentlemen calculated by nature for beholding with a stoicism utterly unmoved the sight that now presented itself to the anti-gregarious gentleman, who lived in the “cottage near a

wood." Between fury and wonderment he was speechless; now he stood still to look at the splinters of his postern, one that he thought would have resisted the violence of no ordinary attack; then he gazed on the footmarks that distinguished the approach of the assailant, be he who he might, and then once more with a stern aspect of revenge his eye reverted to his shattered gateway.

With the quick intelligence of one reared in the forest, his first exclamation, uttered as if for his own guidance, announced not only his fierce intent, but his certainty of gratifying it.

"Whoever the scoundrel may be, he is not gone yet. The horse-tracts are all one way, and, if there's faith in a rifle, he shall never go those tracts back again. Child, stay you out here."

This last caution was addressed to his daughter, and, without waiting to see how it was by her received, the exasperated utterer hastily but silently entered his rifled dwelling; and there, still more to his astonishment, he found a horse quietly tethered in his kitchen, the remains of the meal made by his uninvited visitor littering the ground and table, while ostentatiously laid out on the latter were the three dollars which the well-bred youth had placed there in pursuance of his scheme.

For some few seconds these new objects seemed to divert the fury of the father, by affording fresh matter for curiosity and wonder. The thought for an instant arose whether his own strong chest had been broken open, but, if so, why should the thief leave three dollars of the plunder on the table, more especially why should one who broke into houses for money waste his time, and run the risk of capture and defeat, by commencing a feast instead of spoliation, when every moment might bring back the owner?—a strain of reasoning, much confirmed by the impatient pawing of Breakneck on the floor of the kitchen.

"Why the devil should a robber coolly tether up his only means of flight in his enemies' kitchen, and remain himself to be caught on the premises?" and this consideration brought the misanthrope to the point that the intruder, whoever he was, must be close at hand.

Revenge, self-protection, in short, every feeling of a woodsman, here cried out—"Where's your rifle?" Unfortunately for the owner as he then thought, but fortunately, perhaps, as the reader may hereafter consider the fact, the outraged dweller of the wilds had neglected to load this formidable weapon after last discharging it. Unlocking a door which Herbert had imagined to lead to the stables, but which in reality communicated with the better part of the house, to which the kitchen and rooms over it were a mere appendage, the rifle was now immediately brought from its place of repose, and subjected to the process of charging. In the meanwhile the young lady, who gathered from her father's looks a full determination to carry out the threats his words expressed, naturally felt the desire to ward off any danger from his head, if such were near at hand.

Without very distinctly knowing how this was to be accomplished, even if at all, luckily following the characteristic of her sex, and, led rather by impulse than by any other guide she rushed into the house, and, scarcely knowing why, first ran up to the housekeeper's room, and there beheld, stretched in calm repose on the couch of that worthy person, then absent at market, and who rejoiced in the name of Mrs. Cerberus, the original cause of her father's alarm and fury.

For a few seconds, diffidence made her halt on the threshold, doubtful if she might dare to advance further. Presently, however, she perceived the object of all her terror was locked in deep sleep, and indignation at his intrusion into her father's house giving way to strong and mixed emotions of curiosity on her own part, and apprehension for her parent, she stole on tiptoe to the side of the slumberer.

For some seconds she silently gazed on that marked countenance, with just such an impression as might have animated the looks of Psyche, when the light first falling on Cupid's features revealed to his delighted beholder the exquisite impersonation of love's delicious dream. Reared in those solitudes, she had never enjoyed the slightest opportunity of forming any estimate as to what the superior and more refined portion of mankind might be like. Hardly, indeed, had she been permitted by the inefficient aid of books to repair this want of experience; still nature will train the finest tendrils towards the light, however man may seclude the plant by wall or barricade. So our heroine's fancy had involuntarily peopled the most favourite and delicious spots of the scenery around her with actors far superior to the rude specimens of humanity she had occasionally seen, and thus her glance no sooner fell on the recumbent figure of the youth we have attempted to describe, than all her fear, curiosity, shame, and anger, were momentarily swallowed up in the delightful conviction that she had not imagined the existence of such beings in vain.

Forgetting the concomitant circumstances of the case, the rage he had caused, the annoyance he was likely to create, and, indeed, everything else that could be remembered against him, she seemed only to dwell on the conviction that there before her was now revealed to indisputable vision the exact impersonation of that image which had long formed the hero in all her delicious day-dreams—the one moving spirit that animated the whole world of her unuttered romances.

How long she would have remained thus musing is difficult now to decide, for at this moment the hasty steps and stern tones of her father rapidly approaching warned her that evil was at hand, and, if she wished to prevent bloodshed, the next few seconds were all that remained to accomplish so difficult and desirable a task.

Without considering in what light her conduct might be viewed by the object of her solicitude, that bashful, gentle creature, who but yesterday, if a stranger had been presented at her father's

table, would almost have fled in terror to seclude herself within the privacy of her own chamber, now darted forward to the side of that stranger whose boldness, at least, there was such ample reason to blame, and, laying her hand upon his shoulder, with just sufficient strength to break his slumber, she exclaimed—

“Quick! fly, sir, fly! your life is in danger! Fly and avoid my father’s anger, or your blood will be the forfeit!”

How dulcet and full of transport were those tones to the ear of Herbert, who, though securely slumbering, still retained on his mind the fair form which his imagination had called up to exorcise a ready sleep, and who now, as is often the case, put into the lips of one of the dear actors in his dream the words of Nautila, for by this singular but not unmusical name her father designated this untutored child of solitude.



CHAPTER VI.

“Day ne’er will break on mountain tops
More heavenly fair than she!
She was so like a vision.”

BYRON.

HOWEVER perfect of its kind our hero’s sleep had been, still we must confess it was not of that deep and engrossing nature which required much arousing. In a few seconds after our heroine had given him the caution repeated in the last chapter, she beheld opening upon her a pair of large and dark-blue eyes, which, in the fancy of Nautila, were alone wanting to complete the charm of the countenance before her. Deep in their colour, full in their form, and very brilliant, to the partial and rapid glance of their beholder they seemed capable of giving utterance to any expression, however varied.

But though now fairly awake, our hero, instead of making any reply connected with the danger said to threaten him, and startled evidently into great surprise, swiftly rose upon his elbow, and, after gazing mutely at his fair awakener for some seconds, while the blood rapidly appeared to mantle over her neck and bosom, until even her high fair forehead caught the rosy glow, he exclaimed, almost involuntarily—

“By heavens, she is not less beautiful than they said!”

If, before these words were uttered, Nautila’s usually fair but now most tell-tale complexion had borne witness to the emotions excited within her own mind, how much more intense and power-

ful appeared to be her sensations on hearing the words just uttered.

She felt as if every possession in life could have been most willingly resigned for the simple privilege of escaping that ardent gaze of admiration now fixed upon her. Now she felt as if sinking into the earth beneath, and only too glad so to be sheltered; and then an unutterable feeling never before experienced came over her as she looked right and left as if for some mode of retreat, while her tiny feet seemed to refuse obedience to her wishes.

Suddenly, a full heavy step was heard upon the stair below. This seemed to rally all her energies. Clasp ing her hands with intense earnestness, and moving forwards a single step, she exclaimed,—

“There comes my father, and you are not gone! All is too late: nothing but bloodshed can ensue!”

The unmistakeable agony of the exquisite creature he beheld before him permitted our hero to remain no longer inactive, even though his forced passiveness brought to his enjoyment rapture so great as that of quietly gazing on a face that exceeded all the portraits even his fancy had ever drawn.

At the danger that threatened him, had it been fifty times greater, he would have smiled in scorn; but to assuage the alarm that reigned in so fair a bosom, and with as little delay as possible, was indeed a most sweet duty.

Springing in an instant, and without the least possible noise, from his recumbent position, a mental resolution at that moment flashed before him with a strength and determination nothing but death could change.

“She shall be mine at all hazards,” muttered he, as he rose. “To see and not to possess such a being would leave life a blank.”

“What is it you say? Oh, spare my father’s life, even though he be incensed enough to attempt your own; remember what provocation you have offered him!” cried Nautila imploringly, and misconstruing the half-uttered language of Herbert to which much solitude had made him resort, and thus produced a trick of speaking to himself as every thought passed through his mind.

Answering his fair enslaver with a smile that went further than any words could have done to reassure her fears, our hero quietly but hastily seized the water-jug from the washing-stand, and stepped behind the door just as the angry father reached the other side with firm and awfully-sounding steps, each one planted with a degree of fierce vigour and calculated determination that betokened the new-comer to be quite on the alert against all surprise, and which might well have bespoken the dire extremity to which he was prepared to carry matters.

In another instant the muzzle of the father’s rifle appeared round the edge of the portal, and something like the beginning of an exclamation escaped the ruffled parent.

Not particularly anxious to hear the remainder of this speech, Herbert waited for no more. Darting round the door with a suddenness that defied either opposition or evasion, away he dashed the whole contents of the lavatory full in the face of his intended assailant, and, following up his attack before his victim could have time to recover from that hasty effect of the "cold water cure" which for several seconds deprived the father of breath, Herbert himself sprung out from his ambush, dropped the empty water-jug, seized with both hands upon the rifle, and, before his antagonist could divine his motive, much less resist it, the dangerous weapon was wrested forcibly from its owner's weaker grasp, and Herbert remained master of the field and the life, had he intended to take it, of his involuntary host.

The whole affair was so sudden—the nature and the issue of the attack seemed both so entirely to have surprised the misanthrope, that, though his lips remained parted as if in the attempt to speak, wonderment yet appeared to have permitted no sound to escape.

Bent on taking the utmost advantage, Herbert did not seem in any hurry to permit the old man's senses to find utterance. Assuming an air and manner that poor Nautila could scarcely believe to proceed from any other motive than extreme rage, while the facile features of our hero's countenance were moulded to maintain the deception, he called out to the father, while he made a most threatening motion with the rifle,—

"Confusion rack your old bones, you lazy-hearted publican and sinner! Is this the way you think to earn honest bread of the public? How do you dare, sir, keeping the only tavern as you do for many a long mile to come—how do you dare to go out from home, and leave not so much as a half-witted lad to loose a latch, tether a horse, or give a quiet citizen a can of drink? Plague take such impertinence as yours! a murrain on such barefaced impudence, say I! Do you think my horse, that cost me four hundred and fifty dollars not a month since, has nothing better to do with his hind legs, than to be employed in kicking your infernal thick, stupid doorways in? I've a mind, and a right good one, to break the butt of this rifle over your solid numskull for giving me all this trouble, and thus ruffling my temper, one of the sweetest, too, in the whole Union, to say nothing of your daring to absent yourself from home, and leaving nothing better for a traveller's entertainment than a rasher of bacon, and the devil a feed of corn for his horse! Hold your tongue, you thief of the night! I won't hear you speak—no, not one word! I shan't have done myself for the next fortnight; and don't turn to go down stairs either, unless you wish for this rifle-bullet through your hide. But stay here, sir, while I tell you what I think of your endless presumption, you old carrion crow!—and, that no finish to your audacity might be wanting, to think that you should come up here—here, to a citizen's chamber, where he has evidently shown some desire

to enjoy the refreshment of sound sleep, stumping upstairs, as though your feet were cased in the softest sable, and armed, by Jove, as if you were coming to catch a bear asleep, instead of a weasel—did you ever catch a weasel asleep, old Squaretoes? or lose your time for your pains? Well, I'll let you off for this once; but go down below again this instant, and see that you get ready something decent forthwith for the dinner of an honest citizen, who has served the States upon the seas, and one, moreover, who has eaten nothing since breaking his fast this morning, except the pittance of a little bacon, which he managed to cut in your kitchen below. Come, what are you looking at?—start!”

As this torrent of invective was hurled at the father with the utmost rapidity that two lips could utter it, the countenance of the listener underwent many alterations.

Rage, surprise, pity, doubt, amusement, everything but fear, displayed itself upon the features of the listener. Patience at last seemed to rally to the parent's aid, and, crossing his arms upon his breast, he fairly waited till the younger man, for want of breath, had run to a standstill. When this climax had at length arrived, the father leaned back against the wall, and, without removing his arms from their calm position, coolly demanded,—

“From what asylum did you say you had escaped?”

“Asylum!” repeated the other, keeping up the farce with admirable command of feature, and looking first from the father to the daughter, as if he fancied he could thus himself trace out some lunatic symptoms in the other; “by St. Jago, sir, I thought there was something wondrous strange, Sir Publican, in your style of tavern-keeping! What, so you are a little touched, eh?” pointing to his head—“apt to worship the Lady of the Lake a trifle or so, when she's getting near her full,” stretching out his arm towards the splendid moon, whose partially filled horn, like a bright bow of silver, might even already be seen peeping over the noble pile of forest-trees on the opposite side of the water.

“Well, well, I am sorry for you; but come, don't make yourself unhappy, though I was obliged to break your door in, still, as you are a poor tavern-keeper only, it isn't by an officer of the States navy you shall be damaged. Don't break your heart, man, about it, I'll pay for your door; and if you'll treat us well for the short time I shall remain here—you see I'm a great invalid, and seek quiet and change of air for myself—why, I'll take care you shan't suffer for it! What say you?”

At the end of this query, the father answered not a word, but, stepping up close to Herbert, so that their faces nearly touched, for some space the pair thus stood confronting each other, the father fixing on Herbert a fierce and eagle glance, which shot sharply forth from the grey, shaggy penthouse, formed by his white bushy eyebrows, as if he would read the young man's soul to its very depths, while Herbert received this discomposing

scrutiny with equal nerve, nor allowed a single line of his open countenance to quiver, or betray the slightest thought passing within.

CHAPTER VII.

“On these alone true confidence may lie,
Truth's noble front, and Honour's guileless eye :
To high or low, to rich or poor if given,
These are the only warrantries of heaven.”

AFTER several seconds passed in the singular examination we have recorded, at length the old man broke silence—

“Is there,” said he, speaking in a slow, deep tone, that might well penetrate to the lowest depths of its hearer's soul, “is there one single word of truth in all that you have been uttering? Stop!” shouted he, peremptorily, as he saw the other about to speak, “take me not for that most arrant fool that is to be deceived by mere assertion—to be blinded by the iteration of that which is false, or requiring the repetition of what is true. Of course you will corroborate yourself. Of course, if you have told your story once, you will a second time. No; if I am to be deceived, it shall be by myself for the future. Spare, then, your tongue all trouble. When did any one of your false, accursed race, ever utter anything but lies, or breathe anything but deceit? No; if I trust you, it shall not be for aught your idle lips can utter, but for something that the finger of God has been pleased to place there,” pointing with his finger to Herbert's brow.

“No,” continued the old man, after a pause, “I am no publican, boy—a sinner, God help me! and a great one, though, I trust, more sinned against than sinning, in my day. Yet, for his sake, I will not spurn thee, as I probably ought to do, from my roof, to pass a night unsheltered in the forest. Still, if in return for this deed of nature's religion thou bringest aught of evil—ay, even in thought, to me or mine, the bitterest of all God's bitter curses light on every act or path you do or take, for evermore! Nautila, discharge that rifle. Young man, follow me.”

“A woman discharge a rifle?” exclaimed Herbert, as soon as he could gain fresh utterance. “Publican or sinner, you might be more polite than to give such a task to a poor girl. Here, madam, let me snap that rifle in the air.”

"Boy!" suddenly roared the old man, in a voice like the crack of doom, "if you wish to enjoy the shelter of my roof for a single hour, learn not only to obey every word I say myself, but refrain from sowing disobedience in the path of others! Am I, think you, so poor a rearer of my fold as not to give them the means of some slight protection against the combined villany and violence of that worthless state which we term society? That lady, whom your American impertinence teaches you to call '*woman*,' and '*poor girl*,' is perhaps better able to discharge a rifle than yourself; and that you may never for the future, therefore, doubt either her skill or her courage, she shall strike a mark, such as you would little like to fire at, and still less to offer. Stand before the door, Nautila, and let our visitor look on."

As the father said this, he walked out before the house, and, looking round him, as if for some object of aim, plucked presently from the road-side a large flower of the digitalis tribe. Holding the thin stem of this in his right hand, which he stretched out at a little distance from his body, he walked down an alley in the wood, some sixty yards; then facing round towards his daughter, who still held the loaded rifle in her hand, while Herbert, filled with wonder and amazement, stood beside her, the old man, in a cool and careless tone of voice, gave out the words—

"Make ready—present—fire!" The last syllable had scarcely passed the lips of the utterer, when the sharp crack of the firearm rang out from among the stems of the trees, and, almost amidst the flash that dazzled the eyes of Herbert, the purple flower of the foxglove fell from its stem upon the ground, severed by the exquisite aim of the fair girl, who now quietly dropped the butt of her gun on the ground, evidently unconscious that she had done anything to attract peculiar admiration; still, from some motives that required no explanation, her eyes seemed to seek any direction but that in which the stranger was gazing.

As for Herbert, he, during the brief acting of this extraordinary scene, remained in a manner rooted to the earth, hardly daring to draw his breath; and, when the discharge of the shot relieved him from the painful enchantment, he could find no words to express his thoughts, until the father placed in his hand the headless stem of the decimated weed, saying, as he did so—

"You see we dwellers in the forest know how to take care of ourselves when the hour of danger arrives; and now, sir, shall she hold out a similar mark for your skill?"

Proffering the rifle to Herbert,

"Father of mercy! Not for worlds!" exclaimed the latter, shrinking back in horror from the proposition.

"Well, then, since you are afraid to let her hold such a mark for you, she shall for me."

"No—I implore you not," cried Herbert, extending his arm between the two, and displaying such an evident alarm at the exposure of Nautila to this gratuitous peril, as brought to the

cheek of the latter a look of excited pleasure, that Herbert would have given much to mark, if his attention had not been too greatly engrossed by less agreeable emotions. When, however, the father read in the young man's countenance the agitation written there, it seemed to produce a wonderfully amiable degree of gratification, and a determination to proceed in the course that terrified him, rather than any reluctance to persist in what was clearly so disagreeable.

Perhaps this feeling arose in the heart of the old man from some sentiment of shame at having lately been so easily defeated by so nervous an opponent, or perhaps from the pleasure of teaching a more active and youthful man how formidable an enemy chance had enabled him to overcome. Be that as it may, the father, on hearing Herbert's urgent entreaty to desist, only turned to his daughter, and, pointing to the wood, said—

"Gather some little flower for me to aim at, and go off twice the distance you stood from me."

"Well! of all the inhuman follies I ever saw perpetrated, this appears to me to be the vilest!" exclaimed Herbert, in evident anger and disgust, as he beheld all his arguments thus set at defiance. To this exclamation, like his first remonstrance, no sort of attention was paid. With still rising wrath, therefore, he continued: "Pursue this wanton risk of life and happiness if you will; I, at any rate, will be no party to it! nor will I stand by and see it done! it is idle your firing, sir; I wont look at you."

"Nobody wants you," grimly replied the father, without giving an eye towards our hero, who, shrugging his shoulders and turning his back on the other, quickly entered the cottage.

Scarcely had Herbert time to seat himself, when the report of a rifle reached him, followed, nay, almost accompanied, by a shriek so shrill, so piercing, and that, too, so evidently in a woman's voice, that it seemed to agonize the very marrow in his bones.

"Good heavens! the madman has shot his own daughter!" exclaimed Herbert, rushing back to the wood; but, seeing the father no longer standing where he had left him, he made a short cut towards the spot where he conceived the daughter must have fallen.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Yet are Spain's maids no race of amazons,
But form'd for all the witching arts of love."

Childe Harold.

TORN and bleeding from the brushwood through which he had rushed, Herbert came out upon the green alley of the forest, where he beheld parent and child to all appearance in as fine a state of preservation as ever they had yet enjoyed, while, as our hero came up to them, Nautila, with a smile half of triumph, half of bashfulness, held out the small but shattered piece of maple which her father had cut in two with his bullet.

"What is the matter?" precipitately demanded Herbert.

"Nothing," coolly replied the other.

"Whose scream was that, then, I heard?"

"Mine," answered the old gentleman.

"For what earthly purpose was it uttered?"

"Simply to try your nerves," was the reply.

The expression of mortification that appeared on the face of our hero, and that of triumph which lighted up the countenance of the old man at this climax, formed a most marked contrast: as for Herbert, he looked down at his torn clothes and bleeding hands, and then at the face of the father, as if considering how or in what way he should manifest the rage that swelled within him.

Not a muscle of the old man's countenance could be seen to move. Herbert could not but remember the old boy was still a little in his debt; other prudential motives also occurred to him, and he swallowed—neither very easily nor agreeably, it is true—the wrath that oppressed him.

"You seem to have a queer method of amusing yourselves in this part of the States, sir?" at last said Herbert.

"Yes, we have, sir," returned the other; "but after all, these things resolve themselves into mere matter of opinion. When we have no better occupation, some of us go and break open a man's house: we think it more courageous—at least some do—to manage this in the owner's absence. Then, too, more especially if there are no signs of its being an inn, we eat of his bread, broil his bacon, drink of his wine, and tether a horse or two in his kitchen, larder, or best front parlour, just as the case may be; while, if we are inclined to be especially polite, or especially American—the same thing—we single out some chamber set

apart and consecrated to one of the females of the house, and throw ourselves on the clean bed, clad in our dirty boots and dusty clothes, accompanying these acts with any other exhibitions of original wit and refined humour that may occur to us at the time."

"Come, come, sir," cried Herbert, snatching the old man's hand, and shaking it despite of him, "I agree I have the worst of this argument exceedingly; and, as you have once forgiven me for all the sins of a hungry and thirsty traveller, who was prompted to the rudeness, as much from a love of frolic as from the pressing spur of his necessities, you shall not rip up old grievances by recounting my enormities. I trust you will find me better than my roughness promised, and, as for you, who use your tongue as dexterously as your musket, one almost regrets to find, wasted on the wild, a gentleman who would shine among the most polished throngs of his species."

"Young man," said the other, suddenly turning round, for they had now once more reached his own door, and speaking slowly, yet not without some sternness, "there is one thing I detest. Use it as little as may be, lest I detest you. It is what the English call flattery, the Irish blarney, and the Yankees humbug. What I am I am, and what I am, I know five thousand times as well as you can inform me. This I tell you at starting; I have been a much greater fool in my life than I trust you will ever be in yours. I confided in my species, and I dreamed I might escape the penalty of being deceived. And now, since you have presumed to open forbidden ground, by saying what you think I am, I will tell you in a very few words what you are, and, if you choose to take offence at it, well and good."

"Stay; don't think to get rid of me by that manœuvre. Take offence at you, man alive! I swear I will not!"

"Swear to nothing, sir, and even then you will have taken your oath to all you know. And if you can resign American impertinence for a little space, call me neither 'man alive,' nor any other vulgar and familiar nickname, 'Sir' is good English, and, though a term of politeness, well worthy of being imported into the American. It is the title I give you, and give it back again to me, to whom now, and at all other times when speaking, you will do well to render the respect due to your superiors; for, Yankee as you are, I see that you have owned them in your day: and this leads me to return. Your character is soon summed up. You are a very considerable coxcomb, and have unfortunately fallen into the notion of believing yourself a vastly clever fellow. You are bold, impudent, and dexterous. You have sunned yourself in good fortune's smiles, and dreamed her rays were the warmth of your own beams. You possess some trifling independence, and take this for exhaustless wealth. There is, however, luckily for you, no particular vice in your heart, beyond that knack of lying and deceiving common to your cursed race. If

not spoiled by the flattery of a small knot of intimates, you may get through life creditably. By the style of your manners and carriage even—for I rely nothing on what you have told me—I suppose, like other silly people, you have worn livery in your day, by what fools call serving their country—I conclude in the States navy. I read in your future story many reverses, and some enjoyment. In fine, you have numerous blemishes, but will serve all the end I want of you; and now, perhaps, since you have forced yourself to be my guest, I, like a fool as I am for my good nature, will show you the chamber you are to use.”

The old man having delivered himself of this sweet invitation, walked slowly forward, nor once looked back to see what had become of Herbert. It is true the latter followed him, but more slowly still.

It was not without considerable hesitation that our hero brought himself to accept the hospitality thus churlishly proffered, even, indeed, when he remembered the mode of his forced admittance. The rebellious blood rushed several times to his cheek, then back to his heart, then to his cheek again, as he writhed whilst the secret recesses of his soul were thus laid bare, and with so rude, so unfeeling, but yet so masterly a hand, and in the presence of another, and that other a creature the most beautiful, the most attractive, the most enchanting he had ever seen; and in whose breast he wished, nay, he had resolved, to raise a very different opinion from that her father had so harshly expressed.

After a long pause he looked back to see how she treated his castigation. Perhaps she was enjoying his distress.

Were this so, Herbert felt that no motives, no inducements could make him keep his temper. He would resent the insulting language, and then throw from him all farther thought both of the father and of herself. For some seconds, much as he longed, he scarcely dared to look; but how did his pulses throb when, instead of the satirical smile he dreaded, yet hoped not to find, he beheld Nautila's eyes cast down upon the ground; her eloquent features covered with an expression of the most painful confusion and distress, as if every additional sarcasm that passed her parent's lips found an effect less upon its victim's heart than hers.

Here, here it was that Herbert called to mind that heavenly characteristic of her sex, which leads them ever to side with the oppressed; now it was he perceived that the more rudely and unkindly the father's words were fashioned, the more surely would they plead his cause in the heart of his daughter; far, indeed, before all the praises kindness could ever frame!

Answering the old man's cutting anger with a smile as this occurred to him, Herbert waited to the end of his tirade, and then walked on to the room he offered.

Following the old man more cheerfully than, truth to say, the old man had expected, our hero speedily found himself in an apart-

ment, the fittings of which not only excited his surprise, but in so doing evidently contributed to the pleasure of his host. Halting abruptly in the centre of the room, the latter faced round towards Herbert, and, pointing to the walls, remarked—

“For want of better amusement, I was fool enough to carve these panels myself; they form a fac-simile of an old room in England.”

“Then are those your arms, sir?” naturally enough demanded Herbert, but without sufficiently examining the coat beforehand.

A deep frown gathered on the brow of the old man, who at that moment could not exactly see to what Herbert alluded. The fierce expression on his countenance, however, quickly subsided into a gentle but melancholy smile as he beheld the object of Herbert’s curiosity.

“No,” said he, shaking his head slowly; “my sorrows have been great, but the gallant men who bore those arms were doomed to drain the bitter cup of adversity to the dregs. Those arms are carved there, as in the old room from which this is modelled, in remembrance of one of the race whose fortunes were largely mingled with our own.”

“Surely,” returned Herbert, after a pause of some minutes, “the party entitled to those arms must have been nearly related to the royal family of England; may I ask whose arms they are?”

“True Yankee curiosity and ignorance combined!” muttered the old man, giving one of those bitter, sarcastic smiles expressive of the most profound contempt, in which Herbert had already seen that he was over fond of indulging, and which it took the warmest remembrance of the beautiful daughter to bear without reply from her eccentric father; while, at the same time, these insulting remarks were uttered in that quiet, dreamlike manner, you might almost imagine the speaker intended them for his own information, and that the accidental escape of the words themselves was simply owing to the absent manner of the utterer, and not to any intention of rudeness.

“If the fellow possessed any gentleman-like information,” pursued the old man in this *se parlant* style, “he would know at once whose arms they were without asking the question. Good breeding might have told him that, if I had wished to dilate upon the owner of the arms, I need not have waited to be questioned about them. Yankee all over! Yankee all over!”

Galled to an excess by this contemptuous treatment, yet not daring to give utterance to the rage that consumed him—fearing, moreover, that there might be some sort of foundation for the pungent remarks, our friend at first scarcely knew how to bear himself.

Suddenly a clever thought came to his rescue, and he resolved to profit by it. Immediately pretending to be just as absent as his companion, he replied—

“How devilishly impertinent this old fellow is! But I suppose

it won't do to tell him so. Just as if there were any great utility in knowing how a pack of idle people, who feed on the credulity of fools, and call themselves 'heralds,' choose to paint blue, red, and yellow, with crows, ravens, pigs, spurs, stars, battleaxes, and other absurdities, heaped together! Still, as he is so much older than myself, I'll pretend not to notice his want of courtesy."

At first, when the old man heard this assumption of his thunder, Herbert perceived his surprise to be great in the extreme. In a few seconds, the curling of his mouth indicated a strong propensity to laughter, as if he were much amused with the shrewdness of the device, as in truth he was.

Turning to the original cause of debate, in an infinitely more good-humoured style, the old gentleman remarked—

"Those are the arms of Charles I. They were engraved in the original room during the early part of his reign, and, by some odd fatality, the workmen forgot to insert the crown. The civil wars succeeded, the house was shut up for many years, servants alone resided in it during the Protectorate, and, on the return of Charles II., when the owner came from abroad, the apartment was once more cleaned and repaired, and then, for the first time, the singular omission observed. Superstition is always on the watch for some fresh proof to support her tottering creed, and this forgetfulness of the royal diadem was held by the vulgar to have been a special warning of the monarch's fate.

"What, then, are you, too, inclined to follow ——"

"No," said the old man quickly, interrupting him; "not quite such a fool, though you seem inclined to believe it. I have no faith in any such folly; but, as the arms want the crown in the original design, so, from mere faithfulness in the copy, I have forborne to add them. Besides, you know you republicans are so sensible of your inferiority, that the barest notions of a superior is death to your vanity! 'Twas wiser, therefore, on all grounds, not to taint the pure air of the free States with even the sculptured effigies of royalty's slightest symbol."

"To hear this old man's bitter words and troubled dreaming," muttered Herbert, in an audible but subdued key, "one would take him for some tyrannical aristocrat of the olden times, whom the just indignation of his fellow-citizens had kicked out of house and home—some bigoted adorer of the Bourbon breed of fools, who, having lost by the French revolution the unlimited power of ill-treating others, instead of being ill-treated themselves, can now never sufficiently abuse everything that has the least approach to freedom."

This time, however, the *ruse* that had been so successful a few minutes before appeared to have lost its charm. The old man evidently heard every word of Herbert's remarks, and listened with a smile of derision that denoted his full expectance of them.

CHAPTER IX.

“ Said Father John to Uncle Sam,
‘ Most truly satisfied I am
There is no fault in me.’
Said Uncle Sam to Father John,
‘ Will you just let me whack it on
Upon each fault I see ?’
‘ Ay, mine good uncle, if you’ll let
Me, in return, my red rag fret
On all the faults in thee.’
‘ Why, Father John, that’s precious fun,
I’m very sure that I have none—
Come on, then, I agree.’ ”

FAR from being moved to exhibit any anger at the words of Herbert, his host waited patiently, as if to be sure the other had quite finished what he had to utter, and then, with a smile so sweet, that it seemed expressly meant to say, “The remark I am going to make cannot possibly annoy you,” he went on to observe,—

“The next room I fit up in the carved style will be what the Scotch call a public room, that is, a sitting-room; and as there, perhaps, I may have the pleasure of seeing some of your countrymen,—that is, if any of them should do me the honour to tether his horse to the sideboard, or herd his pigs in the fireplace, or pen his sheep in the bay-window, or otherwise contribute to my delight and amusement, by telling me he takes my house for an inn, in such case I hope I shall be able to present to his inquiring curiosity some subject not so likely to disturb his refined feelings as a royal crown. Yes, I have thought the matter over well, and, by dint of a little practice, have great hopes of being able to do justice to the national emblem—a flag with so many stripes in it, supported on one side by a negro woman in chains, a ‘free-born’ American flogging her the while with a cat-o’-nine-tails, while the supporter should be on the other a second enlightened citizen of the same free State, his clothes well filled out with the plundered copyrights of other nations protruding from his pockets, which a third free-born American should be very busy in picking; the moral device of which picture, you see, would be to exhibit in the truest colours the present happy state of American trade and public principle. Don’t you think it’s a happy device?”

The old boy looked up at his guest’s face with such a self-

satisfied smile, so cool and so insulting, that Herbert would have given the world to have extinguished him at a word, scarcely knowing all the while what reply to make, or how to hide his annoyance.

After pausing for a moment to think of a reply, while his adversary remained exulting over him, the young man at length answered—

"The device, sir, would not be bad, certainly, and would, I think, meet with great patronage from those eminent judges who are said to have devoted their exclusive attention to that part of our national jurisprudence which has been termed '*Lynch-law*;' they, I have no doubt, would confer an immediate reward not only upon the designer, but also upon all the minor parties who could afford any satisfactory proof of having contributed to its execution. Still, I should say, for general American approbation, you might meet with more deserved applause if you could get up some such design as this—a number of John Bulls engaged, both by sea and land, with man-of-war and bayonet, in bullying foreigners of every other nation for not being as '*constitutional*,' as themselves, while in the background you might have two or three subsidiary allegorical devices of great effect—as, for instance: on the right hand you might have an election of commoners to serve in parliament, with a noble duke driving a herd of his tenants to the poll by the copious exhibition of notices to quit; this on one side,—a rich Birmingham maker of buttons buying up free votes—on the other, the voters taking their bribes with one palm, and the bribery oath with the other. Then you might have the pressgang dragging a man from his wife and family to serve on the seas against his will, with a recruiting sergeant slipping his shilling into the hind-pocket of a drunken mechanic; the tax-gatherer turning a family starving to the street, while he sold the bed from under them to pay for window-light: this might be ably diversified by half a dozen mistresses of another great duke, driving down to the Treasury in a carriage and four, and helping themselves to a few thousands of the public money so collected: and, as for the flogging, we need not be behind-hand with that; we might make a gallant earl flogging a soldier on a Sunday in a church converted to a barrack, or an honourable post-captain of two-and-twenty flogging a midshipman of forty-three, old enough to be his father; these might be varied with interiors of new poor-law unions starving able-bodied men indoors, and Chartist meetings of men and women burning down vicarages and police-stations on the outside. But one thing, above all, should occupy a prominent place in the tableau—some small device, however trifling, which would teach all beholders the very imminent danger resulting to those who live in glass houses from the foolish practice of throwing stones."

As Herbert closed his remarks with this apothegm, he did so in fear and trembling. Seeing that the discussion had not taken the

most favourable termination for his host, he rather feared that not unfrequent result among disputants, the loss of the old man's temper. But the latter's resources were not so soon exhausted; instead of showing the slightest anger, he seemed to laugh heartily to himself, and muttered—

"Surely the fable of the Cock on the Dunghill was written expressly for these Americans. If they only scratch up a vulgar adage, how infallibly they mistake the lacquering for gold—vulgarity for wit."

Then, as if none of this by-play had been heard by his guest, he made the most courtier-like bow, and speaking aloud, and with all the distance in the world, "Do you condescend to so English a usage as washing your hands ever, sir? if so, I leave you to yourself till our dinner hour, which will not now be long delayed." Another profound bow followed, and Herbert heard the slow and steady footfall of the eccentric, gradually departing down stairs.

The first feeling of our young friend was annoyance; he had succeeded in his bet, but now mere pride of the wager no longer possessed the slightest value in his estimation. Accustomed, by the bold sort of dash that characterised his manner, to carry most things before him, he could not help feeling humbled by the cool, off-hand manner with which his host seemed to set him down. His host, too, an old man, who must naturally have grown dull for want of sharpening with the world, and who, secluded in that nook of the forest, could never, as he once thought, prove in the least degree a match for him; yet, with what ease he seemed to play with him—nay, for anything our hero knew, might he not have discovered the real motive that drew Herbert into this adventure? and if so, would he not be sure to foil him in the object yet to be attained?

A pang shot across Herbert's heart as the image of the daughter here presented itself, and he remembered how much he should really lose, and in how far worse a position he should now be placed by a failure, to obtain that lady's affections, than if he had merely been baffled in a silly bet, and thus escaped the sorrow of seeing her, or rather the sorrow of seeing and estimating all her worth, and yet foregoing her future knowledge!

Plunged in this reverie, he remained for some time seated on the bed, while his eye ran round the dark, panelled room, and he reflected on all the singularities which his position presented.

At his age, however, despair and foreboding are of short continuance. Springing from his reverie, he soon finished his toilet, and descended, as he thought, to the dinner-room; a wrong turning in the passage, however, led him into the open air, where for a few moments he looked round with a degree of surprise, which prevented him from recognising any object in sight.

He now, for the first time, was able to perceive that the door which he had so rudely forced, and which as he thought was the front entrance to his host's house, was in reality nothing more

than part of the back premises : the archway through which he had issued led from under a rustic balcony, composed of the rough and knotted branches of various trees, selected for their quaintness of form, and allowed to retain their bark.

These had been skilfully put together, to form, or rather ornament, a spacious veranda, running the whole length of a low and old-fashioned front that comprised another story above that on the basement, and no more. On this verandah all the upper windows appeared to open, while its floor served as a shade to the windows below.

The house was built in imitation of that singular style, once common in England, and of which many beautiful specimens are still to be found in the counties of Shropshire and Cheshire,* the style being still known by the title "half-timbered."

In a country where wood is plentiful, this black and white checquer-work, peeping out from among the trees produces an effect pleasant to the eye, and capable of being easily repaired, the beams being left all of them with the bark on, and blacked, while the interstices, filled up in general with bark, were in this instance made good, with a composition of mud, and leaves, and straw, somewhat resembling the cob of Devonshire, only that its exterior was, by constant lime-wash, kept of a pure and spotless white : over this a rude trellicework of small but straight branches of some kind of underwood had been nailed, and the whole now presented a mass of brilliant flowers, whose delicious sweetness loaded the air around.

CHAPTER X.

" With such a paradise and such an Eve,
Who to Love's solitude would not resign
All hopes beside, to fall as Adam fell ?"

KEATS.

To the scene which thus unexpectedly, in the solitude of the forest, met Herbert's eye, description can only do faint justice. Jessamine, clematis, and roses of every description twined and drooped in all directions in the utmost abundance ; the crimson beauties of the pyrus, the airy elegance of the passion flower, combined with other creepers to give to the exterior of the cottage an air of refinement little prognosticated by the entrance which Herbert had forced, and which took him quite by surprise.

* One of the largest and most perfect of these now remaining in England is "Bramall Hall," near Stockport.

From the verandah, supported by a series of rustic pillars similarly covered with plants, there extended for at least two hundred yards a long close-shaved lawn, bearing on its bosom the most unmistakeable traces of its redemption from the dominion of the forest, in a number of unsightly stumps about five feet high, from which vast trees had been originally felled.

Taste had done everything in its power to soften and disguise the harsh ugliness of these relics. Several of them were fantastically carved into the resemblance of huge porters' chairs; grouped round a vast oak stump in the centre, the sides of which had been hewn in mimicry of a Grecian altar, quantities of roses of all the scandling tribes had been trained around these in numerous forms; little circular flower beds were also dug at their base, and blooming as they all were with every variety of colour, they produced an effect upon the eye which, novel as it undoubtedly proved, was still more delightful.

Around this singular lawn remnants of the forest still flourished in true American vastness and vigour, forming on both sides a high green wall, interspersed with sylvan avenues opening right and left to walks of the most sequestered shade and romantic aspect.

Flower beds of many different shapes filled up each vacant nook, as well as gemmed the verdant bosom of the lawn; all were in full bloom, all bore witness to the care bestowed on the succession of their plants. Large as was the space thus occupied, in no direction could Herbert's eye detect the growth of weeds or those traces of neglect which reproach the cultivator of a garden.

The final boundary of this fairy spot was that, however, which perhaps more than all riveted our hero's eye, and conveyed a feeling of delight and a sense of home to his bosom.

A line of low and flowering shrubs, broken in its form by a slight rise on the left hand, terminating in a graceful sweep to the right, was now seen in strong shadow against the brilliant surface of the lake beyond.

The recluse's cottage had been built, as it were, on an isthmus, formed on the side which Herbert now regarded by a large bay of the lake, and on the other side, to which Herbert had now turned his back, by the banks of the river which that lake fed with its waters.

The aspect of the garden being almost due south-west, the lower disc of the unclouded sun was seen to the right just approaching the distinct blue line, where the broad expanse of the lake marked out the horizon at a distance of some twelve miles, and throwing the whole flood of its golden splendour upon the bosom of this inland sea, for such in truth it appeared from the spot where Herbert now stood, transfixed in admiration.

A thousand delicious memories were summoned to his enjoyment by this single image. The struggles, hopes, ambitions,

sorrows, and delights through which his youthful life had passed, all were bound up with the recollection of that mighty mother of the watery element; and unexpectedly to behold the sea, or anything that reminds us suddenly of its appearance, must, to those who have spent some portion of their lives upon its waves, ever prove a magic summons, which bids us in a few brief seconds live through again a life of years.

After a few minutes' brief admiration, during which our hero's eye roved with fond delight from point to point of the exquisite picture before him, he paused to survey the gorgeous colours of an American sunset, reflected on cloud, and tree, and path, and flower.

The yellow pearly region of the lower sky was bathed with that indescribable tone of colour, now red, now yellow, and now faint green, by turns paling away into the dark blue ether overhead. As he marked the faint outline of some distant cape forest, clad to the very edge of the wave, and listened to the gentle plashing of the lake while it rippled to its lovely shores, a deep sigh broke from his bosom, and he muttered in an audible voice—

“Who most appears the fool now? the philosopher who chooses this calm retreat in which to await the termination of life's questionable penance, or the busy, frothy, arrogant idlers of an hour, who laugh at him as a madman for his seclusion?” and here justice compelled him to add the words, “like myself.”

This last addition seemed to afford fresh food for musing, his head drooped upon his breast, and while his looks sought the ground with an absent, unconscious air, an expression of perplexed thought gradually settled on his countenance, and his feet slowly advanced towards the termination of the garden leading to the lake; presently the muser came to a dead halt. As if unconscious that he thus “wore his thoughts upon his sleeve,” he slowly added—

“With such an exquisite being, how happily could I, too, in such a solitude, wear out life's evening grey!”

Here the walk was resumed, until slowly the babbler reached the belt of flowering shrubs that had formed the nearest boundary of his vision. At this point, to his surprise, Herbert perceived that a bold precipitous descent of rock led directly down to the waters of the lake; a little beach of sand and pebble intervened, and seemed to have been improved, like every other spot around, to the utmost.

On one side of the little bay, formed by the jutting out of the forest on either side, had been built a permanent bathing-house, having for its foundation a number of piles, or rather logs, partly embedded in the shore of the lake, communicating with the dry land by a little platform, and which, by the care bestowed upon it, Herbert rightly concluded to be sacred to the use of Nautilus, who was clearly the goddess of the spot, and who, in our hero, had already gained a worshipper of no faint devotion.

At a little distance from this bathing-house was a long covered shed, also built on piles, having one of its ends resting on the rock, through which a few steps were cut in descent for its entrance; and here, floating securely from all danger of the powerful sun, lay a small but useful yacht.

Herbert's eyes brightened visibly, as they rested on this last addition to the comforts of the place: once more his thoughts found utterance as he leaned on the rustic gate, giving entrance to a flight of stairs cut in the cliff.

"With what innocent, yet varied amusements in this retired spot might life be passed with such a creature!"

Who this engrossing and all-perfect creature might be, our hero did not seem willing to trust to the "babbling winds;" but, after a pause, as if to make certain that her time-killing properties were of so decided an order, he added:

"Yes! never was there a being more made for love! One might bask for a whole eternity in the sunshine of those exquisite blue eyes. Are they blue or dove-colour? Upon my soul, the whole College of Narbonne might argue the question for as long a space as the Council of Nice once sat, and yet not come to a right conclusion! Now they are blue—now they are grey—now they are decided dove-colour—now they are purple—now they are quite dark. Not the chameleon varies half so swiftly as their exquisite hues change with every new emotion of her mind. Oh, they are eyes for heaven!—so long, so large, so soft, with such dark drooping lashes. Certainly, she is a most divine creature!"

"To gaze on her at the first rosy dawn of daylight—to go out sailing and fishing on the lake with her—then, perhaps, to return, tired with excessive sport, to throw oneself on a sofa, with that being seated beside one, to read the last new novel of England or of France, as the case might be; to throw that aside for a light *tête-à-tête* dinner; to watch such eyes as those, growing, if possible, still brighter, under the mild beneficence of champagne; or, this grosser refreshment of the day ended, to see those most exquisite of all beautiful hands bringing one's drawing-paper, arranging one's colours, sorting one's pencils,—bidding, in short, the creations of the artist's brain spring into life beneath her prompting loveliness; while she, perhaps, sits down to the piano, and trills forth one of Bellini's most tender arias with all the soul which music can receive.

"I wonder if she sings? Oh, yes, she must sing; such a divine face as that has music in every form, and melody in every feature! Then, perhaps, the moon would rise; then think of the joy of ordering one's horses, and setting out on a moonlight ride with such a fairy."

Another pause succeeded, and then the monolocator breathed a low, deep sigh; some seconds after which he continued, and we fear with too great truth:—

"Such happiness would be too perfect for endurance! A

faury! a faury! Yes, indeed, her possessor might well expect at the first bright turning of the road to see her flit from her saddle some bright night, and leave him mourning for her loss behind. That, in truth, is the most serious consideration of the whole. Who marries any one so perfect must look to have no ordinary share of the calamities of life. Had I not better, then, while the path is till open to me, retreat at once, and so give up, on one side, all the brilliant happiness of such a match, and, on the other, all the countervailing responsibilities and sorrows it would entail?"

Another pause succeeded this self-interrogatory.

"No," cried our hero, suddenly dashing his hand on the rustic gate over which he was leaning; "perish all thoughts of such a surrender! Whatever be the penalty, with her I will, can endure, ay, conquer all things. It may be a part of my evil genius that I should ever have beheld her at all! If so, that is an ill I must endure, for it is past remedy; but having once beheld and longing to possess so fair a prize, it never, never shall be said that I drew back from fear. And so, come then what may, woo her I will; the rest is left to Heaven!"

As Herbert said this with characteristic impetuosity, he leapt over the rustic gate and proceeded down to the lake below. Our readers will hereafter see how often, at a subsequent period, he had occasion to refer in thought to the musings of that hour, and to consider again and again how important had been the question he then decided.

CHAPTER XI.

"While songs and poems bring his soul relief,
He lives on sentiment—but—feeds on beef."

AFTER leaping the boundary of his host's lawn, our hero speedily found himself by the margin of the water. With that eagerness which we all feel to explore any unknown spot, Herbert hurried on towards the wood on one side of the bay, utterly forgetful that he had left dinner awaiting in the most cruel state of suspense behind him. Of this he was soon reminded by the stentorian summons of his proposed father-in-law, whose sonorous voice rather rudely knocked down one or two of the little finishing coping-stones, with which he was decorating the exquisite castle in the air he had so recently employed himself in building.

In this style of architecture Herbert certainly was one of *the*

most accomplished artizans it would have been possible to encounter. From the first rude design and foundation block, up to the very hoisting of his flag upon its ramparts, no builder could be more swift nor perfect, and it certainly is much to be regretted if any of his aerial structures descended harshly upon the head of their proprietor.

We have also seen that, like a wise and prudent host, he not only "built his hall," but took care to put a few good things within it, as, to wit, when he brought forth his enticing store of champagne, in the midst of blue eyes and sentimental sighs, and varied with dessert, Bellini's operas, sketches from nature, and rides by moonlight.

At this juncture, we say, one could not but have great respect for his style of housekeeping, and, though it might seem somewhat profane in an out-and-out lover to be guilty of such thoughts, yet there was a touch of nature in them, which would not altogether allow us to suppress it.

At this moment, however, there was far more substantial fare within reach. Herbert heard his host's voice. The image of dinner pining beneath neglect and cooling covers, made him rush swiftly back to the cottage, and, after handing Nautila to a seat, an indifferent spectator, from a mere survey of the scene that followed, would have found it difficult to infer that Herbert had devoured a side of bacon and a quartern loaf, with other trifles, not quite two hours before.

From all our hero had seen, he was induced to exhibit much less of the talking prattler, and much more of the attentive auditor, than he had before shown. As yet he had been wholly unable to assign their due position, either to the father or to his child; he now remarked that very little was said by the former, who seemed engrossed by his own thoughts, while every passing moment appeared rapidly to dissolve the reserve of Nautila, if the mere shyness of a retired girl could merit such a name.

The wine of the Côte d'Or, which Herbert had so much extolled in his musings, circulated in plenty; and before dinner could be fairly called at an end, Nautila and Herbert were discussing general subjects, more on the footing of two familiar cousins, than with the diffidence of a pair of bashful lovers, who at first sight have fallen deeply in love with each other.

When Nautila retired from the table, it was to the privacy of her drawing-room, but some feeling of restlessness induced her to open the window leading to the lawn. She, too, strolled down the same path which had shortly before been paced by Herbert; she also rested at the same gate, and gazed upon the lake, where, though the setting sun no longer threw the gorgeous magnificence of its departing rays upon the surface of the limpid element, the full and yellow moon sent down its quivering, tender light, stealing along the tiny billows, and producing in the mind of the beholder a still more dangerous association of ideas, as is generally

the case when the heart of the reflector is at all concerned in the cogitation.

Nautila, too, had her musings, but of what style and nature was the castle her fairy thoughts created, we will not be so rude or prying as to declare further than to observe, good reader, that, had you beheld that gentle and bewitching creature thus leaning in the bright moonlight, and pensively watching the play of the waters beneath, while the enamoured air whispered through the dark masses of clustering curls that just stirred upon her full and gleaming bosom, you would have given—ah, what would you not!—to have remained close by, and formed the object which caused that hitherto peaceful and ever gentle breast to heave with some unusual emotion.

From this attitude our heroine was disturbed by the sound of footsteps at her side. Turning round, she beheld her father and Herbert advancing to meet her, and already close at hand.

The latter had, indeed, with all the quickness of a lover's eye, beheld Nautila's figure glide across the lawn, and speedily thereafter made a motion to adjure the wine cup for the cool air of the evening.

The old man, who was unusually engrossed, gave a sort of a grunt, which Herbert interpreted into an assent, and, rising, led the way. The father followed, and, on reaching the spot where his daughter was standing, uttered a word or two of conversation, and then seated himself in a little bower that overlooked the boat-house.

Herbert, like an experienced swain, here made a strong motion to prevent this example being followed, and instantly expressed the great distress under which he had laboured before dinner, for some kind guide to tell him the name of a very rare and singular plant that grew beneath the opposite window.

Nautila, of course, professed her readiness to enlighten him, and, as the spot in question was at the other end of the garden, Herbert, equally as a matter of course, offered her the support of his arm. This Nautila, in mere kindness, as hostess, was in duty bound to accept. When, however, they arrived at the opposite window, and Herbert was called upon to point out his very rare and singular plant, he found to his dismay three roses and a clematis tree.

This was very unfortunate! Had there only been a geranium near, he might have said something about its species. As it was, he tried to mutter out something about the tribes of the rose trees.

Endless as are the varieties of that beautiful flower, those in question were obviously the common monthly roses; so that he had not the audacity to say a word more about them.

Then Nautila, of course, saw through the innocent "device of this picture," and blushed, felt herself blushing, and trembled to do so; became conscious of her trembling, and attempted to with-

draw her arm that Herbert might not discover it. The very attempt, of course, making the trembling more susceptible to our hero, he not only ventured, impudent dog, to detain the little arm, but to give it a slight pressure, a very slight one, of course—indeed, the slightest in the world, but still quite enough for Nautila to feel, for she instantly withdrew the arm, and in so doing loosened her gold bracelet, and it fell to the ground. Both parties stooped to catch it, and, in the effort, Nautila's cheek just grazed Herbert's forehead.

To Herbert, this simple contact felt like an electric shock, the delight and remembrance of which remained long, long after the moment of its occurrence had passed away. To Nautila it seemed as if a living coal had touched her cheek; how thankful she felt to the cold moonlight that was unable to reveal all the depth of her augmented colour.

In the mean time, Herbert had regained the bracelet, naturally expecting as his reward permission to clasp it in its place. This, Nautila, with a seriousness and obstinacy of which so light a trifle scarcely seemed worthy, was resolved to deny. The penitent submitted, and whether it was the dejection of his manner, or what other cause we know not, but, when the bracelet was fairly settled, and he again offered his arm, it was not refused.

Once more they resumed their walk, and Herbert naturally began to converse of the beautiful scenery around them—the moonlight, the lake, the cottage, its elegant gardens, and the exquisite taste evident around them, all became the subjects of his remark and praise. From these he wandered on into other matters a little more sentimental, and, by the look of Nautila, more interesting.

It was the first walk by moonlight she had ever enjoyed with any one of her own age and of the opposite sex, with any one, in short, who could be fairly termed an adorer, and was destined, therefore, most naturally to sink profoundly fixed in her remembrance.

The deep gentleness of the voice she heard beside her, the tender yet respectful manner, and the too evident admiring gaze the speaker could not help directing on herself, all produced a powerful influence.

How long they had walked Nautila finally knew not; how long they might have continued their promenade may also perhaps be a matter of equal uncertainty, had not their route been suddenly intercepted on a short turn by the square figure of the father, who, in his tart, quaint style, demanded—

“Are you waiting for sunrise?”

Herbert felt his companion's arm tremble once more at this question, accompanied by what appeared to be an involuntary attempt to withdraw it. Convinced, however, that the only mode of managing the eccentric was by not giving way to him, he replied—

"Sunrise was certainly our first object in the walk ; but, as we see the clouds are gathering, perhaps it may be as well to resign a bowl of gold for a dish of tea."

"Humph!" said the father, and he led the way to the cottage.

CHAPTER XII.

"Look not thou on beauty's charming,

List not thou unto the singer,

Vacant heart, and ear, and eye,
Quiet live, and easy die."

WALTER SCOTT.

PREPARATIONS for the fragrant infusion were already on the table when our friends entered the drawing-room.

Herbert had now time to look round him, and, to his great delight, beheld, amidst other tokens of feminine refinement, not only a piano, but a harp, and, in one corner of the room, something that looked wondrously like a violoncello-case.

"Surely," muttered our friend, "this curious old fish can never unbend the rigidity of his fibre to so light an amusement as a violoncello accompaniment. Nautila is musical, then; I wonder whether she sings as well as plays! But I need not ask the question."

And here came the lover's usual suggestions as to musical looks, musical voice, &c. Herbert's suspense was not doomed to last long.

Scarcely had the tea equipage been sent away, when the old man turned abruptly round upon his guest with a simple question :

"What instrument do you play?"

The question certainly was sufficiently short, but it would have taken Herbert long enough to have enabled him to answer it as satisfactorily as he could have desired.

To admit boldly that he played on nothing would be at once to give his sarcastic querist a decided triumph over him, which he was most unwilling to allow. With a somewhat American touch of sagacity, he thought over the number of instruments of which it was most unlikely that his tormentor would have a specimen in the house. By some fatuity, the bagpipes occurred to him as a sort of British instrument of which he had read and heard a

description, though actually he had never seen a specimen in his life. Colouring slightly, he replied—

"Why, to tell you, sir, the truth, though most partial to music, I do not play much myself."

"Thank you; when I ask you the question, perhaps you may give me that answer. I never asked you whether you played much or little, but simply what was the instrument on which you did play. Now, perhaps, you will have the kindness to tell me."

"Oh, positively, you must excuse my saying anything about it! It isn't a sort of instrument at all practicable to play indoors."

"What is that to you, sir? Can't you name it, and allow us to judge whether we want to hear it or not?"

"Oh, very well, certainly, sir, since you insist upon knowing. You'll smile when you hear of my choice—the bagpipes; but it's a long time since I——"

"Oh, don't trouble yourself; I can accommodate you; I have, in this very house, an old family set, that will be all the better for airing. We'll adjourn to the lawn presently, and you shall make the woods ring again. It will do my old ears good to hear the chaunter of the pipes on this side the Atlantic."

Herbert felt as if he could wish to disappear through the floor when this provoking proposal was made. In vain he endeavoured to stop his host; the old gentleman, in a few minutes, had left the room, and our hero expected momentarily to see him return with a small organ under his arm, or some similar horror. He would have asked Nautila what the instrument was like, but was afraid to confess, even to her, the act of braggadocio into which he had been betrayed. To his horror, in this very point, he was anticipated by that gentle person exclaiming—

"How very strange papa should have had such a treasure in his house for so many years, and that I never should have seen it! Pray, what are the bagpipes like?"

"Oh—why—ha—hem—like? Why, I hardly know how to describe them. Am I to understand that you have really never seen them?"

"No, never; but I have the greatest curiosity to know what they are like. Pray, can you accompany yourself upon them? Can you sing to the bagpipes?"

"Why, yes—that is, not exactly. It depends a good deal upon circumstances—a very good player might be able to do so. In the mean time, will you be kind enough to open your piano, and favour me with a song yourself, which will be far sweeter than the bagpipes?"

Nautila murmured a gentle assent to this proposition, and, at once complying with the prayer, sang the first *aria* from "*Gazza Ladra*," with a voice, style, and manner, that left Herbert a thousandfold more enslaved than ever by that rapid passion which their first interview had kindled in his breast.

The ice once broken, song followed song in quick succession—Nature had been so prodigal in her gifts to our fair heroine, that she felt no exertion in pouring forth, for the hour together, a succession of the most brilliant and finished melodies. With the whole modern Italian school she seemed perfectly familiar—her voice was a full, round mezzo-soprano, to which constant use and perfect taste had added the most brilliant execution, the softest manner, and most extensive flexibility.

After an hour had passed in this delightful manner, the father reappeared to say, that of a particular cupboard, containing the family bagpipes, the key had been mislaid. Many apologies followed to Herbert for this vexation, though, for very joy at its occurrence, Herbert could almost have gone down on his knees and worshipped him.

The old man, thus disappointed of an opportunity of testing Herbert's instrumental powers, seemed to turn as a last resource upon his own; withdrawing what was evidently a highly-cherished violoncello, that bore at least the thumbing of a century and half upon its sounding-board, from a case of stiff Russian leather. Nautila, at this signal, rose from the piano, and, first parting the hair upon her father's forehead, and giving him a kiss, which he returned by a silent pressure of his arm round her tiny waist, the graceful girl glided to an old press, and selecting two music-books which had evidently borne the brunt of the fray for many a year, she drew forth the music-stand for her father's accommodation, opened a page at one of Hadyn's finest symphonies, placed the lights so as to spare his eyesight to the utmost, and then arranged her own book on the piano. The old gentleman, after watching her motions with looks that relaxed into an expression of the fondest affection, finally gave three taps with his bow upon the music-desk before him, and away they went together.

As for Herbert, he contented himself with mutely turning over the leaves of the lady's book; and, if before he had been filled with surprise to know how she could have acquired in that wilderness so exquisite a style of singing, and pronunciation so purely Tuscan, this feeling was increased tenfold when he beheld the rapid execution which she possessed on the piano, and heard the brilliant and elastic touch with which her fingers made it speak.

Who could have been her master? In the United States Herbert well knew that in none of its most polished cities were any accomplishments so highly prized as those which he had just witnessed, nor any for which the possessors and instructors could reap a higher remuneration.

But in this solitude, who could have been her master? or was it possible that the queer, old-fashioned, bitter eccentric before him could himself have instructed her to such perfection? Hitherto he had been so engrossed with the daughter, he had paid little or no attention to the performance of his host.

His curiosity now, however, aroused, he directed his regard to that quarter, and soon became sensible that there existed quite sufficient ability in the father to realize in a pupil every proficiency which Nautila had displayed; and, as if to clear away any remaining doubt which might exist upon the subject, there now intervened in the duet between the performers a long solo for the smaller instrument.

With a careless rapidity of handling, that showed the violinist quite at home, the father now ran through a movement of great difficulty, and then commenced a slow and exquisite passage.

The strings under his fingers now seemed absolutely to mock the human voice, while from beneath his bow sounds came forth so round, so softened, so perfect in their gradual increase upon the ear, you almost wondered that any thing harsh or abrupt could be drawn by any want of skill from the same instrument.

"What the devil is he?" then muttered Herbert—"or rather what the devil has he been? If skill alone were the test, he plays like a music-master. Was he, I wonder, first-fiddle at the Italian Opera-house in London, or second violoncello at San Carlos, or leader of the bass at Milan?—and yet kings don't usually go on visits to violoncello-players' houses, unless perhaps he was teacher of the fiddle to that royal family which he seems to hold in such respect; not that I ever heard of their excelling in that accomplishment. No!—Violinist as he is, that proud, imperious eye has never been cowed by any menial position. Well, let him be what he may, it does not alter his daughter; and she, I hope, will some day be Mrs. —"

"What were you saying?" suddenly interrupted the father, turning round as he heard the buzz of words behind his chair.

"Who!" Herbert exclaimed, as he felt the blood mounting into his temples—"Who, I, sir? Nothing! I—that is—except I could not help remarking how exquisite was the time you kept with your daughter."

"Indeed, sir, you do me too much honour!—you do me too much honour, indeed!" said the old gentleman, rising, pressing his right hand upon his breast, speaking very slowly, softly, and impressively, and making two very low bows at the same time. "I know not what your customs may be in the polished regions of the United States; but, in a place so rude, so old-fashioned, and therefore, of course, you will undoubtedly say so unrefined, as England, parties who are supposed to have enjoyed some of the best opportunities of good breeding forbear to indulge in the familiarities of 'your daughter,' 'your brother,' 'your mother,' and so forth, but are content to give to those around them their proper styles and titles; that of the lady whom you mentioned is Miss St. John. But, as to keeping time, I am afraid you can be little of a performer even upon that antique instrument the bagpipes, if you have yet to learn the vitality of time to music."

To this speech Herbert replied by a slight bow, and nothing

more; he felt the blood circling and burning in the uttermost tips of his ears, while rage in the highest degree swelled his breast.

"Impudent old coxcomb!" he muttered, changing his position to some more distant part of the room, and reflecting on the delight it would have given him to have caught a younger man humbling his vanity in so public a manner.

"I suppose," muttered Herbert, "it is in this way he intends to pay me for breaking open his door, and forcing upon him the honour of my acquaintance. Ungrateful old dog! he seems by no means adequately alive to its value; and yet one cannot help admiring the cleverness with which, in a quiet way, he retaliates for what was certainly a great outrage; and, in return for my breaking open his door, he crucifies me before his daughter's eyes—but still they are his daughter's eyes—and for his merits on that behalf I forgive him all besides."

At this moment the father and child commenced one of the duets in "Puritani;" and, rapt in the treat thus afforded him, Herbert forgot for a while all the indignities that his scornful host had thrust upon him.

At last the amusements of the evening were concluded; and when finally he laid his head upon his pillow, it was with a heart more than ever most utterly given and abandoned to the fair songstress of the forest, and the love she was born to inspire, wherever the magic of her eyes could gleam, the melody of her voice be heard, or the charm of her abilities be appreciated.

CHAPTER XIII.

“ When the wind is in the west,
Then it is they bite the best.
When the wind is in the east,
Then it is they bite the least.
When the wind is in the north,
They bite a little, and so forth.
But when the wind is in the south,
It blows the bait right into the fishes’ mouth.”

ISAAC WALTON.

WHEN Herbert awoke next morning, the early beams of day had already lit up the dark panelling of the room in which he slept. He had purposely left the window partly open on the night before ; and now the first breath of early morning came to his lips laden with that undefinable fragrance of the forest, which seems to carry such a sense of freedom and delight to all it greets.

The early song of birds, the gentle stirrings of the breeze, and the delicious brilliancy of the newly-risen sun, all combined, with that freshness which repose imparts to the mind, to call forth in our hero an intoxicating sensation of delight. But there was one feeling more potent than all the rest, unseen, almost unnoticed, which is able to clothe with magic powers of delight the humblest objects and the meanest associations—*Love*, pure, unmixed, and overwhelming love, as yet unchecked in its aspirations by fear, unembittered by jealousy, unfettered by distrust, unchilled by caprice in its object, and unimpeded by any obstacles of authority—*Love*, in its dearest, freshest, fairest aspect, filled his bosom, and reigned supreme over a domain that had not yielded for many a long year to the blind god’s power, even if it had ever before so perfectly surrendered to his sway.

Under this treacherous but most incomparable delusion, life wears a new aspect, joy an endless multiplicity of forms, and rapture breathes in everything we do, or think, or see.

Herbert then awoke, and, after gazing steadily round the room for a few moments, once more closed his eyes in order to enjoy, in undisturbed security, those sacred visions that had blest him through the night, and still seemed to hallow his pillow.

Whatever might have been his intentions of further indulging in the dreams of morning, they were all rather summarily terminated by some most unaccountable noise at his bed-room

door. Springing to his feet to observe whether the roof had fallen in, or what might really be the matter, his alarm was converted into a far different feeling, by discovering, upon the opening of his door, that the riot was only occasioned by his host, who, standing in the simple habiliments of night, was very busily engaged in springing a watchman's rattle.

On seeing our hero appear, he desisted, it is true, from his noisy employment, and, simply uttering the word "Dress," retired into his own room.

Though far from understanding why he was thus peremptorily enjoined to robe himself, nor in any degree admiring the style in which he seemed to be placed under the orders of another, he thought it wiser to conform, and, in the course of three quarters of an hour, left his room, and prepared to place himself under the disposal of his eccentric entertainer.

Having, in search of his host, looked into the sitting-rooms used on the previous night, however in vain, he wandered into the garden, and, hearing voices beneath the extreme boundary, hastened thither to see from whom they might proceed.

Looking over the shrubs, to his astonishment, he found the boat afloat and equipped for use, sails, oars, and everything ready. The old man, standing in the bow, was already pushing her from the shore with a boat-hook; and sitting in the stern sheets—a matter of which he took infinitely greater note—was Nautila herself, dressed in a costume of her own choosing, and especially suited to the occasion.

A kind of coarse grey scarf was wrapped round her bust over a light blue dress, the sleeves of which, being fitted to her person, displayed the admirable symmetry of her shape, while on her head she wore a little cap of plain blue cloth, ornamented with a single ostrich feather; she sat busily employed in arranging some fishing-lines, which were placed on separate reels, and, on the appearance of Herbert, for whom she seemed to be fully prepared, gaily cried to him—

"Maste haste, Sir Sluggard, or you will be too late!"

It needed not, however, this summons to quicken the steps of our friend. Foreseeing that the old man did not in any way stop the boat to allow him to come up with her, he swiftly sprang down the steps: and although the little yacht had already parted from the land, a single bound placed him upon the second thwart from forward, and he walked aft and shook his fair enchantress by the hand, without any of that awkwardness or want of balance which must have accompanied the feat with any person not accustomed to the sea.

As the old gentleman did not speak to him, neither did he to the old man, but, quietly taking an oar, they pulled in comparative silence for about half a mile to the fishing ground.

Here some excellent sport awaited them, in which the father was soon perfectly engrossed. Herbert, however, instead of any serious

attempt at fishing himself, devoted his time rather to the baiting of Nautila's hooks, and the replacing of those that were carried away ; an occupation that gave him numberless opportunities of gazing at those eyes of which we have heard him speak so highly and at such length—while from mere modesty we will here add nothing of the interminglings of his large, powerful hands with those little taper fingers, or the divers gently-spoken accompaniments the two hours thus passed afforded him the opportunity of making.

Already the well of the boat was piled with the scaly produce of their morning's labour, when the old man, pulling forth a gold watch of considerable antiquity, and, it must be confessed, of that style of elegance which now belongs rather to bed warming-pans than to modern horologes, declared the hour to be eight o'clock, and a necessity for breakfast imperative.

At this announcement, Herbert resumed the oar—they pulled once more quickly back to the cottage. The old man took out the fish, and, accepting Herbert's offer of staying to put the boat to rights, he himself carried up to the cottage the product of the morning's sport.

Some feeling—it might have been laziness—we do not presume in such nice matters to decide—but some feeling of one kind or other—induced Nautila to remain seated in the stern of the boat, while Herbert guided it under cover of the shed, took out the oars, masts, sails, &c., and put them in their respective places.

During this operation it so occurred that sundry little conferences took place between the youthful pair, all amounting in reality to nothing, but yet it appeared of so engrossing a nature that the old gentleman had to call three times most loudly on his daughter's name before she heard him summoning her to preside at the breakfast-table. At the third peal our hero hastily put by the various spars in question ; and, assisting his fair companion out of the boat, gave her his arm, while they mutually hurried up to the cottage, somewhat conscious of appearing before the old gentleman in the position of detected criminals.

Whatever their offence might be, however, no charge was preferred against them ; and it may be safely presumed that Herbert was too wise to make any inquiries on the subject of any. The breakfast presented on the occasion was one which did honour, not only to the *genus loci*, but full justice to the appetite which had been acquired in the progress of the morning's sport.

A large venison pasty flanked the outworks of the table, supported on one side by some of the fish caught that morning, split open and broiled ; a buffalo's tongue cold, various fruit conserves, a noble pile of home made bread, with anchovies, cold game, and a few other trifles, made up the sum total : the coffee had been roasted only a few minutes before it was made, and the tea might have shaken the nerves of any gentleman manufactured at Manchester or Sheffield, though he should possess a cast-iron frame from the former fitted with steel nerves from the latter.

"I begin to have great respect for this old fellow," muttered Herbert as he rendered the fullest equity to all the tempting claimants round him; "his wines are good, his cook is good, and he has a perfect angel for his daughter. Whatever he may have been, or even intended to be, I maintain against all the world that these are virtues sufficient to wash a blackamoor white!

"Let us even suppose, at the worst, that the old gentleman was once a maker of buttons, or a grinder of candlesticks; what does it signify when he can lay his hand on such a breathing piece of perfection as sits before me, and say, 'Sir, allow me to introduce my child;' or place his hand on such a bottle as we discussed last night, and add, 'Sir, the pleasure of a glass of wine!' I wonder if I ought to offer to depart to-day? Fine day; I wish it would come on to rain ploughs and harrows, lighten like an iron-furnace and drop hail about the size of twelve-pound shot: it would be such a reasonable excuse for not departing; whereas now I don't see how I can avoid at least offering to call my horse and start, and I'll bet ten thousand to one that the old boy would see me at Jericho before he would add the slightest remonstrance to induce one to stay, or have the common politeness to express a grain of sorrow at his visitor's departure. Go, I fear, I must."

"I am afraid you hardly liked your breakfast," interposed Nautila, who observed the dissatisfied air of her guest.

"Nothing can be more admirable," replied Herbert.

"Do you really mean that, or is it an idle compliment?"

"I never was more in earnest in my life."

"I'm very glad to hear you say so, but you looked so spitefully just now at your broiled fish, varied by such a reproachful glance at the buffalo's hump, to say nothing of the cool contempt you have exhibited for the pineapple jelly of my own making, that I began to fear we had nothing here to chime with your gastronomic inclinations."

Whether or nay Nautila really saw through his perplexity, and was thus amusing herself with its effect, Herbert knew not. There was a sparkling laughter in her eye, and a satiric dimple in her cheek, giving altogether an expression of the utmost witchery to her countenance as she bantered him on the dejection of his own, that, while it bespoke her to be every inch her father's daughter, gave her, if possible, new charms in Herbert's eye.

"What a roguish, merry soul she'll prove when one comes to know her thoroughly," muttered Herbert. "After all, I must confess that even beauty loses half its charm if the mouth it decks with smiles is unable to utter a good thing, as well as look it. That is a kind of beauty that stands not upon the order of its going for old Time. Besides, too, I confess I admire a woman who, on an emergency, can think and act for herself, and is not totally helpless the moment one's back is turned! Moreover, clever people are so much more easily guided than stupid ones. But to come back to the original question. Stupid or clever,

can I, in common politeness, refrain from proposing to depart to-day?"

"What's that you say about common politeness?" inquired the old gentleman, taking up the words of our hero, who was totally unaware that he had uttered his thoughts aloud, and now coloured deeply when he heard them thus unexpectedly quoted to himself.

"Surely," continued the old gentleman, "you never take into consideration such a subject as common politeness, do you? I should have guessed your practice to have been based on principles wholly independent of so old-fashioned a thing as common politeness. Let me persuade you, now, not to pay any sort of attention to anything so wholly out of your line as common politeness; depend upon it, you'll ruin your character for consistency for ever."

"Egad! the old gentleman's right," again muttered Herbert; "I'd quite forgotten that I am going here under a totally different system. Politeness, then, to the winds! If I go when I can't stay any longer, that is all that can possibly be expected of a visitor who commenced his stay by breaking open his host's house." Then, in a louder tone, that he might be heard, he proceeded:—

"I believe, sir, you're right; I was certainly about to do so strange a thing as to have recourse to common politeness; but, armed with your authority for evading it, I shall certainly comply with your suggestion, perfectly convinced that, in neglecting common politeness, I cannot do wrong when I follow so great an authority as yourself. And now, sir, pray may I ask how you and Miss St. John proposed to amuse yourselves after breakfast?"

"Sir, I shall have the greatest pleasure in laying before you our plans for your kind approbation. For one hour Miss St. John will read Italian with me, and then our horses will be ordered to the door, and we shall take a long ride; after which, we shall return to our home, and if no free citizen of the free states of America has taken the little freedom of kicking our door open, and eating our dinner before we are ready for it, we shall hope to discharge that duty to our cook in person, after which various matters may claim our attention. I hope, sir, to this programme you have no very serious objection to offer."

"Sir," replied Herbert, rising and laying his hand on his breast, as he had seen the other do, and speaking also with the same assumed gravity,—“Sir, it gives me much pleasure to have it in my power to assure you, that for the whole of your proposed arrangements for the day, so far as I have heard them, I can afford you my entire approbation; and that you may possess the most indubitable proofs and assurance of this, you will be pleased to learn that I shall in person have the honour of attending to the Italian lecture, and that I shall forthwith give orders to my own

master of the horse, in order that I may have the delight of sharing in your ride. Perhaps, Miss St. John, until the breakfast things are cleared away, you would not object to a short stroll in the garden."

As the father neither expressed nor looked any dissent to this proposition, it was forthwith most frankly given; and a few minutes more saw the lovers again wandering, though by a different light, along the various beautiful walks which had been cut with considerable skill through the forest round them.

CHAPTER XIV

"O love! young love! link'd in thy rosy chain,
Let sage or cynic prattle as he will,
These hours, and only these, redeem life's years of ill."

BYRON.

As it would be only at variance with our design, in writing these pages, to occupy the attention of the reader by detailing at an unnecessary length the progress of our hero's suit—and it is, indeed, far from impossible that we may have already trespassed on his patience by the degree of detail we have been induced to use,—it will now suffice to state, that day after day stole away, and yet each succeeding sun beheld Herbert still a resident at the cottage, and still more anxious to prolong his stay.

As for Nautila, up to this period she had been watched with all the lynx-eyed vigilance which it was in the power of her father to bestow; and though her education, which he had himself conducted, had been guided with a view as much as possible to subdue any inclination she might have to court acquaintance with the world,—though she had been guarded most effectually from the slightest supposition that her own charms were in the most distant degree superior to those of any other young women, yet still the reading rendered imperative by the style of education she had enjoyed, together with the natural feelings and impulses of youth, made her hail with delight the advent of a companion who would be interested in all that interested her, and share in every merry freak and impulse which her own disposition so warmly prompted.

Of love, it is true, she had read slightly, and, indeed, but thought little or nothing on the subject up to this time; now, to her surprise, and in violation of all her father's previous notions, she had been permitted most unrestrained intercourse with one whose

character, though far from faultless, yet presented those solid and ardent properties most likely to call forth a strong attachment in the breast of a young and warm-hearted girl, placed in her peculiar situation, who, from her seclusion, would be unable to feel very acutely any want of refinement or politeness that his manner might occasionally display, and who, in the wild and simple life she had led, would readily appreciate the manly openness and fearless daring that marked his character.

Thus predisposed to appreciate each other, our readers will easily perceive the extreme danger in which both were placed, if any real impediment should ever arise to their union; for what human beings could reasonably be expected to bear such close juxtaposition as our friends endured, and yet not be guilty, if any guilt existed in the act—a guilt we cannot, at any rate, perceive—of becoming much and sincerely attached to each other?

Scarcely a morning passed on which they did not, as we have seen, go out together, accompanied by the father, on the lake. Together they read; and as Nautila was by far the better Italian scholar of the two, she gradually became his instructor in that seductive language—no very safe post to fill with any swain anxious to use, fairly, it is true, but still to the uttermost, every advantage which such a position might offer him. This past, they all rode forth on horseback; and here the post of instructor being changed, it fell to the share of Herbert, who had to see that the fair rider was not endangered by the high-mettled animal, which her father had recently presented to her, and which she would persist in riding, though scarcely yet sufficient mistress of her seat to do so in perfect safety.

The father, it is true, always rode with them. But his pace was one invariable slow trot; while that of his daughter, if she could have had the wish so natural to her more youthful spirits, would never have gone at anything less than sixteen miles an hour. This, of course, took the two younger parties too far ahead. They were bound to wait patiently till her father came up; and the rapid motion of the gallop subsiding into the linger of a walk was, perhaps, even the still more dangerous pace of the two.

Few opportunities of intercourse between young people more swiftly strengthen a growing attachment than that of riding—the exercise, the air, the buoyant delight of rapidity without fatigue, lay you open to be pleased with everything and person around. Danger, though not imminent, is still sufficiently possible, to give to the weaker party a dependence on the stronger; and this, once added to an incipient feeling for those at hand, soon enslaves the affection.

To riding succeeded moonlight rambles, music, and often chess, till at length it seemed to Nautila as natural to find her companion always at her elbow, as that the sun, clouded or clear, should rise to make the day.

But amid all Herbert's intense enjoyment, nothing surprised

him more than the singularity of the old man's tacit approval. Clearly he was too clever a person to imagine that all these opportunities of personal intercourse could be enjoyed without producing a natural result; and yet if he had entertained those decided feelings as to his daughter's not marrying, which had been represented to Herbert by his friend the rice-planter, it is quite clear that he would not have allowed anything like such an intimacy as had evidently, under his own eye, sprung up between his daughter and Herbert.

What might be the reason why the old man should relax in his favour any prejudices he might have on the subject, Herbert never troubled himself to inquire: he was sufficiently delighted with the fact; and, concluding that everything would now afford smooth sailing before him, he seized the first opportunity accordingly of proposing to the lady of his love, who, to his great delight, accepted him; but, at the same time, did so with the full understanding that this was to be subject to the consent of her father, which our hero was to obtain.

Fully convinced that this might be gained without any difficulty, Herbert at once undertook the task of winning it, and only waited for a favourable moment of approaching so momentous a topic.

The tenth day had arrived; and Nautila, who scarcely had a thought apart from that of her devoted, was duly informed that "the precious question" would be solemnly discussed with the dessert. Nor was the old gentleman altogether without some inkling of the treat intended for him, since it required no wit to perceive, by the unusually constrained manner of the young people, that some matter of considerable moment to them was pending.

At length the early flight of Nautila, to leave the coast clear for Herbert, removed every doubt which might previously have existed on the subject; and straightway the brow of the father grew almost as clouded as that of the other two, as if he began to consider how far he should be inclined to assent.

Herbert did not, it is true, quite like the aspect which the old gentleman wore; still he seemed to feel certain that he could not intend to say nay; and, after one or two rapid and bounteous applications to the decanter, he at length screwed his courage up to the sticking-post, cleared his throat valiantly, and so commenced.

There may be a few of my readers who have, before reading these lines, been placed in a similar position; and they, therefore, may be able to sympathize with that degree of embarrassment which oppressed our hero, when he had got as far as the words—

"There is a subject, sir——"

So vague, so general an assertion, yet one challenging such special attention, at once riveted the listener, who seemed to enjoy a malicious pleasure in remaining perfectly silent to hear the flounders of the speaker.

Our friend, when he had got thus far, came to a dead halt.

The countenance of the father, as Herbert did so, looked as much as to say, "Proceed or not, I am resolved you shall have no help from me," while he remained as immovably fixed as "monumental alabaster." At last Herbert once more got up his steam, and proceeded:

"There is a subject, sir, vitally important to myself, nor yet wholly uninteresting to you, on which I shall be glad to have your calm attention."

"You have it, sir," interposed the father: an intimation which did not tend greatly to reassure the agitated lover.

"I am aware," continued Herbert, "that our acquaintance commenced under circumstances singularly unlikely to be favourable to me; still, as you have allowed that acquaintance to progress, I have too great a reliance on the ability and good sense which I know you to possess, to fear that you will be either surprised or angry at that which is the natural result of the delightful intercourse I have been allowed to enjoy with your family.

"It is quite unnecessary for me to enlarge on those personal and mental advantages which present such attractions in the person of your daughter—that is, I beg your pardon, of Miss St. John."

The old man grimly smiled.

"Permitted the unrestricted enjoyment of her society as I have lately been," pursued Herbert, "while no one can feel more grateful than I do, at the same time no one can more fully appreciate her excellence. In short, sir, I have formed an attachment for Miss St. John, which I hope I may be permitted to say will prove as deep and lasting as the qualities which called forth that attachment are solid and enduring. I have the great happiness to know that the lady herself does not disdain to smile on my hopes; and I am authorized by her to say that your sanction is alone wanting to our union."

"That is so, is it?"

"It is, sir; but before I conclude the request—indeed, I may well term it the earnest prayer which I now make to you in this matter—I feel bound to add that I ask for nothing more than your daughter's hand, being perfectly able to secure to her that position in future life that she has always hitherto occupied. My income, in English terms, amounts to a full nine hundred a year. Though in Britain this makes but a small independence, yet, in the States, for a lady educated to find her happiness in a manner so simple as that of Miss St. John, this sum would prove all that she could require. With regard to settlements, I can only add that your wishes shall be mine."

Here Herbert, who considered that he had made a speech of the finest order, ceased his oratorical powers, and allowed his rapidly beating heart to regain its quiet pulse at leisure. A pause of several minutes elapsed, and as the father was sitting in shadow, the expression of his countenance was not easily detected; at last, however, he spoke.

"To allow you to imagine that I have not in any degree foreseen this proposition, on your part, would be tacitly to share in that which, if stated, would be untrue; and, perhaps, I may as well state to you here, *passim*, that of all things upon earth which I abhor and detest, a lie bears, in my regard, almost the greatest possible degree of detestation. It is an offence which I never pardon. It is an artifice to which, on no account, I ever have resource. Some people palliate falsehood by discussing the question of its degree. With this style of reasoners, lies of some species carry with them no crime; but I am quite against this doctrine, and I will tell you why. If you will find me a person who will never, on any occasion, either veil, hold back, or ever palter with the truth, much less deny it, I will engage that person shall go through life as blameless as the most honourable man can pass through this scene of universal ill. In short, sir, falsehood, to my mode of thinking, is the first step to every other failing; to cut off this is therefore to cut off the whole. If you have never considered this subject, pray do, for without truth, little as the happiness of this world may be, scarcely any, even of that little, can be gained by us."

As the old man set forth with his exordium, he fixed his keen grey eyes on Herbert, as if he would search him to his very soul, and this in reality he did, as the colour rose most palpably to our hero's feeling, and in the dim twilight even, he scarcely felt secure that its increase might not be observed.

Too truly was he conscious of having formed the old man's acquaintance, under that which he and his American companions would call a *ruse*, laughing at it together and enjoying it most heartily, but which, under the doctrine just laid down by his intended father-in-law, must, he knew, be deemed an offence of scarlet dye, a breach of the truth of the first magnitude.

He sat, therefore, feeling and knowing that he was a culprit, condemned though not indicted, and much did he rejoice that he had so skilfully withheld from the father's knowledge all means of detecting the trick that had been played on him.

In this Herbert somewhat overlooked the powers of acute vision which the other possessed. Dim and dark as the light might be, the old man fancied he could trace some unusual agitation in the countenance of his listener, and, therefore, ventured to add the caution which he now uttered. Still, though it did occur to him that Herbert might not in times past have been quite so scrupulous in these matters as could have been desired, yet it never even glanced across his mind that, in the present case, there existed any circumstances of deception, and, therefore, after the digression already stated, the father continued,—

"In the proposal you have just made, you have very properly given me a full account, not only of your present position, but also of your whole prospects, and detailed to me exactly everything that it is necessary for me to consider with reference to

the welfare of my child; it will only be becoming, therefore, in me fully to explain to you the decision at which I have arrived, and the reasons which have guided me in that decision; and this also involves some slight sketch of my own history."

But before we proceed any farther with the narrative in which the old gentleman here indulged, we will treat him decently, and commence a new chapter.

CHAPTER XV.

"Her father oft invited me—
Still question'd me the story of my days.
I ran it thro'—e'en from my boyhood's hour."

Othello.

As the recluse finished the last words which we have recorded in his speech to Herbert, he gave a heavenly smile, so our hero thought, when addressing him for the first time as "My young friend," and casting a scrutinizing glance at the bottle, added, "the tide is at the ebb, I perceive, and I think this occasion of import sufficient to merit a glass of the truest Burgundy that ever bore the sentence of transportation beyond the seas without the slightest reproach to its moral character."

Herbert muttered something intended for an assent, and his host departed.

"I think the old boy means to accept me," said he; "this bottle of the choice!—looks wondrously like a consent. Ah! here it comes—one of the right sort."

And certainly, in verification of Herbert's assertion, the father now returned, bearing in his hand one of those agreeable, long-necked looking flasks, venerable, if only from the dust that covered it, and promising a cordial satisfaction of a degree that even the esteemed and learned author of "Ion" might approve.*

The cobwebs having been duly and tenderly detracted, the cork was at length withdrawn, the contents found richly to answer the expectations of the host, and the latter then proceeded:—

* See divers researching disquisitions on various wines, in a little journal of travel by Mr. Sergeant Talfourd, though I believe printed for private use only.

"Before I enter into any explanation of my own position, let me do you this justice: I once had occasion to remark on some little trait of curiosity you exhibited, but since then I must in all truth admit, that the discretion you have shown on this point has pleased me highly; nor do I even now intend to enter at length upon circumstances of my former life, which are, and ever must be, most distressing for me to recall; let this suffice: I am the last representative of an old English family. Everything, apparently, that could render life enjoyable, waited on my advent into this world, and now what is the result? Few more miserable creatures still linger in existence. The only consolation of which my sorrows are susceptible is this, that to my own folly or vice is attributable no part of the grief under which I live. Family sorrows of the most distressing kind overclouded all my prospects, and before manhood had reached its prime, life, and all that it contained, were hateful to me in the highest degree.

"Towards my fellow-men I had always conceived I had a duty of great kindness and sympathy to discharge. I have taught myself to look on every mourner as an afflicted brother of the same vast family, and to the best of my ability I trust that I have relieved them accordingly. How has this been returned to me? Ingratitude of the most bitter and overwhelming description was my payment! Had this been the general and sole return, I trust I was too good a Christian to have allowed it to move my wrath—I was too great a philosopher to be taken by surprise. But the chief blow I received was from the hand of one who should have shielded me to the utmost. I had just strength of mind sufficient to forbear from taking my own existence, so necessary to the protection of my child; and then, horror-stricken at the nature of which I was a part, the nature of mankind, and deeply disgusted with the world, and all that appertained to it, I determined to seek some lonely spot where, as far as practicable, not even the slightest remembrance of my species or my woe should unnecessarily intrude upon my recollection.

"In England, from the state of society and other causes, this was impossible. To France and Italy I had strong aversions: the laxity of principle in both countries was the last danger to which I should wish to expose a daughter, whom my death might leave an orphan at an early age. In the wilds of America I well knew I might find a retreat as impervious as if I had sought the depths of the ocean: its distance, too, from the scene of my sorrows, gratified my abhorrence of the slightest reminiscence of anything connected with them. For the political doctrines prevalent in the United States, I had, it is true, little taste; but sorrowful experience had taught me that all politics contain alike the same intense selfishness and villany, and the only question is, who are the parties most able by force or cunning to cheat, rob, and oppress their adversaries.

"To America, then, I came, and here I have lived with my only

child, and one or two servants, on whom I could rely. The resources I possessed for amusement in my own mind were, I well knew, perfectly adequate to every occasion, even of the greatest solitude. I had only one duty to perform on earth, and that was, not to secure the happiness of my daughter—he who talks of securing the happiness of any one in this world is a fool, either unable to extract the truth from the great moral lesson constantly passing around us, or a knave, who, knowing the precise position in which we are placed, has some secret object to serve by misrepresenting it.

“Well, then, I knew that to secure her happiness was impossible; the few first indispensable requisites for tranquillity were, I knew, already in her possession—health, a sufficiency of means, and an untainted mind. That which I had myself gone through told me that these might still leave their possessor steeped to the very lips in misery. Had my religion permitted it, I should most unhesitatingly have deprived her of life——”

Herbert gave a sudden start, which, however, the old man did not notice, but proceeded—“and after this have resigned the fearful burden from my own shoulders. But as this, the greatest boon I would confer, was not properly within my power, I disdained, as I trust we both ever shall disdain, the attainment of a supposed good by a present act of conscious impropriety; and all that remained for me was to guard her as much as possible from every inroad, which, sooner or later, unhappiness is sure to make to a greater or less extent on every human heart.

“I now considered how this object was to be accomplished, and this led me to examine minutely in what quarter sorrow would be most likely to assail her. Let our reason be cultivated to any extent, be it originally of whatever strength it may, I knew by sad experience that the heart is the weak postern which betrays the garrison to the enemy. Could I have interdicted my daughter from marriage, I should most certainly have done so; by remaining single she would not only be exempt in a great degree from some of the severest trials of the human heart, but would also fail to increase our accursed progeny, and therefore would also fail to swell the number of those who are born for little else than the endurance of evil. But this I knew I could not achieve. Those who, either in their own instance, or in that of their children, imagine they can bid the heart forget to love, or, failing love, to feel no aching void, longing for its existence, are guilty of the same absurdity as the maniac who should ask the sun and moon to reverse their orbits, or the current of the human blood to circulate by the veins and return to the heart by the arteries. Those immutable laws which the author of nature has stamped upon his creations will give way to no human will, however despotic in its control, or even just in its desires. I saw that my child was daily growing into beauty; I felt that the winter of my own years was growing close at hand; I found that

nature had gifted Nautila with feelings more than answering, if possible, to the exquisite promise of her countenance; and to imagine that any person gifted with those large expressive eyes could fail to experience the tyranny of the affections in their fullest extent was most vain. The very intellect which they bespoke told be how additionally every sorrow would be aggravated by the fineness and susceptibility of mind on which it would react, and how readily she would decide upon this solemn truth, that the bitterest of all actual calamities is, after all, light in the balance when compared with those unsatisfied desires with which the disappointed ever afflict themselves.

"Since then, no prayers and no reason of mine would be sufficient to transfer to her the fruit of that experience I have bought so dearly; since nothing would avail to prevent her seeking the vortex of human passion and human suffering, or to render her happy and contented even by the seclusion which would keep her safe, my duty it became to launch this frail and tender bark on this tempestuous sea in such a manner, and with such a pilot as should—not save her from the storm—that is impossible—but enable her to feel the gale as lightly as might be, and to insure her reaching some sheltering haven at the last.

"But how was I to accomplish this? To no one could so sacred and so serious a duty be delegated. To insure the full accomplishment of my hopes, it would be necessary that I should introduce my daughter to the world; that I, who had foresworn the throng, should again be one of its idle bustlers; that I, who had already been shipwrecked upon its shoals, should once more court its treacherous perils; that I, who had so much cause to sicken in disgust from the least worldliness of society's arts and hollowness, should, in my old age, turn flatterer of this very sect, court to be admitted to their bosoms, sue to be advantaged by their smiles, share in their objects, and support, by my presence, the mockery they exhibited!

"Yet this would become necessary to my plans, nor, view them as I would, could I doubt the sound wisdom on which those plans were based. More and more every day I shrank from the dreadful task I had imposed upon myself: the more I contemplated such a sacrifice, the more agonizing did I feel convinced it must prove. I strove to reconcile my spirit to the struggle, but the bitterness with which I contemplated leaving this seclusion for the turmoil of the world, it is impossible to describe."

CHAPTER XVI.

“The day drags through, though storms keep out the sun ;
And thus the heart will break, yet, brokenly, live on.”

Childe Harold.

“In the midst of this struggle,” continued Mr. St. John, “you arrived. The scene of your reception I need not recall. It will suffice to tell you what passed in my mind when I heard the account you gave of that mistake which made you force a violent entry into my dwelling. Men who have long lived secluded from the world are apt to adopt strange principles, and act upon doctrines which, if gravely propounded to mankind, many would hold to be eccentric, some even insane. For my own part, I confess I am always inclined to adopt rules of action which I may have justified to myself by seeing that they were simply original, while to others, who may judge more sternly, they may have seemed to wear the air of insanity.

“Whatever I do, I do quickly ; and whatever resolution I may form, it is a rule of my life never to alter it. Three exceptions I have made to this, and each individual change was for the worst. I will now tell you what occurred to me on our meeting. I first thought your whole story was a lie ; but this, on reconsideration, I saw great reason to think incorrect, partly from the completeness with which your tale and your conduct tallied in every particular, and partly because I read in your countenance a nature not expressly given to lying.

“Having once arrived at this conclusion, I confess, your bold defiance pleased me. All that I sought in a son-in-law was a particular kind of character of my own fancying. In your courage and audacity, I traced the ability to protect those who should be committed to your care ; in your countenance, I thought I could read the honour and principle which would guard sacredly any trust reposed in you ; and in your person and manner that which would be sufficient to attract and render permanent the affections of woman—if such a thing can be !

“If these views, I thought, should be realized on a further acquaintance, all the grief and pain of once more returning to the world would be spared me, and that alone was sufficient to break through a rule I had always hitherto observed of never admitting human being within my threshold. The various trials I have made of your temper and disposition have, I confess, ended

entirely in your favour. I have satisfied myself that you are strictly the party whom you have represented yourself to be, and I am now perfectly willing to give you the reward which I believed you to deserve, in the hand of Miss St. John, the greatest treasure that I possess in life.

"With regard to fortune, make yourself perfectly satisfied on that score. I shall neither ask you to make any settlements on a child of mine, nor allow her to go to the arms of her husband empty-handed on the day of her marriage. She will become thenceforth entitled, in her own right, and free from any control of her husband, by my settlement, not yours, to a sum of one thousand a year, from money in the English funds.

"I have only a few words of caution to offer you, for, the more sparingly advice is given, the more in all probability it will be regarded; and if you choose to follow the hint contained in these lines, you can scarcely fail to enjoy as much happiness as Heaven permits to humanity.

"The old lines to which I allude are these—

" 'The winde is loudest on the highest hilles :
The quiete lyfe is in the vale belowe.'

"My explanation of this text is brief: Heaven is much more equal in the distribution of its favours than mankind are in general disposed to admit. They who seek great honours, must expect great sorrows; but where the reasoning worm—for man is little better—contents himself with a humble station, he comes nearer to that universal balance which has been decreed by the Great Ruler of mundane affairs, and which you will find to contain no great pleasure and no great pain; and thus the avenging angel often passes by the humble roof-tree to lay desolate and low the lordly hall. Those revelations of my own past history, which I have thought it due, in justice to myself, thus to give, you will ever preserve inviolate. And now let us drain the last glass to the happiness of Nautila, and then we will adjourn to her sitting-room."

In obedience to the old man's proposition, our hero finished the bottle of Burgundy with a most devout health to the lady of his love, and scarcely able to restrain his footsteps for very joy, bounded forward to her dear presence.

With equal kindness and delicacy the father forbore, for a brief time, to restrain by his society the happy meeting of the lovers. Herbert, as he closed the door, perceived how the case stood, and fearing no interruption, sprang towards Nautila, and clasping her tenderly in his arm, stole first uncounted kisses, not, by the way, the first theft of the kind by many hundred, which he had committed in the same quarter, for kissing—let me, as a lawyer, honestly confess it—is the most "cumulative" offence with which

my studies have ever made me acquainted. The theory of the crime appears delightful in the extreme; what the practice may be, I know not—of course.

To return, however. Herbert, having thus grossly committed himself, exclaimed, as he folded Nautila again and again to his bosom: "For once behold, my angel, the proverb is untrue—'the course of true love' *has* 'run smooth.'"

Herbert was not more superstitious than the generality of mankind, but at that moment, some half-sort of consciousness, something like "one of those airy tongues which syllable men's names," seemed to whisper in his ear, "You had better not cry till you are out of the wood;" and again and again in future days that thought recurred to him.

At present, however, he was far too highly overjoyed to permit the slightest depression to weigh down his extreme delight, and, after performing all those antics in which much older men of high temperament are apt to indulge when delighted, such as running with the lady half round the room, she at that moment occupying rather an uncertain balance in his arms, whirring round on one toe, *à la* Fanny Ellsler, and waving his arm violently round his head, much like the fogleman who gives the sign of cheering at a county election, &c., &c., the sound of her father's methodical footstep in the adjoining passage suddenly called him sufficiently to his senses, to sit down by the side of the tea-table, and pretend absorption in some book which he found at hand.

The old man entered, and when he observed Herbert studying the page, quietly placed his hand across the type, remarking, as he did so, "Too violent a coolness to be real."

Slight as the action was, it gave to Herbert so powerful a proof of the old man's masterly insight into the secret springs of human motives, that he firmly resolved never from that day to use the slightest possible deception with him more.

"No," murmured our hero, "if I even contemplate murder, I'll out with it, or he would be sure to read it in my looks, and, perhaps, set down the mere contemplation of the deed for its actual commission."

CHAPTER XVII.

“ First and passionate love, that all
Which Eve hath left her daughters since her fall.”

BYRON.

If any of my readers should have passed through life without enjoying that period generally vouchsafed to the existence of the meanest, in which we experience the sensations of consuming love, pure in its design, requited by its object, and, for a time, rejoicing in the smiles of fate, what a most brilliant passage of existence is yet in store for him!—if, within the large circle of forty years, and if frozen out beyond that period, when the snows of manhood are fast falling on the heart, how utterly inestimable has been his loss!

All that the poet can paint of ecstasy—all that the most devoted enthusiast can anticipate of paradise—all that the most refined voluptuary can seek of pleasure—everything and all are realized in that burning delirium—prosperous love. Truer words were never breathed than those used to commence a page some few chapters back,—

“ O love ! young love ! bound in thy rosy chain,
Let sage or cynic prattle as he will,
These hours, and only these, redeem life's years of ill.”

It has been said that then “the moments fly.” Away! Love has no moments. Time is annihilated; the sun sets or rises; the moon grows full or pales; every change is but a renewal of fresh joy; the only note of time the heart can take is by the separations which knell their sorrows on it; then life itself is but a blank, and everything is suspended till the renewal of that presence when the same intoxicating existence begins anew.

From the moment that Herbert became satisfied by her father's consent that he had really won so exquisite a prize as *Nautila*, as the future enchantress of his days, he resigned himself to the utmost to all the excess of life's deepest attachment. With our heroine we need scarcely repeat that this was her first love; she, therefore, could form no dream of anything to cross it; and if she looked lovely when Herbert first made her acquaintance, the entire happiness that now filled her bosom added, if possible, to her charms.

Now that the young pair were engaged, they were allowed to be still more unrestrictedly in each other's society than before. Of sleep those young bright eyes knew little or nothing: often before the sun had dawned, they were both upon the lake; long after the golden orb had sunk to rest, they wandered by the moon; and when Nature, who moves not from her course for human woe or human joy, withdrew that silver orb, then, by the deep stars, they enjoyed the warm tranquillity of the night, amid all the sweetness of that secluded spot: nursing hopes destined to destruction, and forming plans of happiness that mortal being never yet could realise.

Nothing could be finer than the whole of the weather during Herbert's stay, and now that he had gained the post which entitled him to be considered as *Nautila's* protector, they constantly rode together to every beautiful sight and scene in the neighbourhood.

Accustomed to a life of the most exciting hardship and danger, how deeply into the soul of the young sailor sank the hours of that tranquil felicity! Alas! had he possessed one tithe of the wisdom and experience which Mr. St. John had evidently gathered in his stormy passage through the world, he would have known that the very existence of such a season of full happiness betokened the approach of some deadly peril close at hand; but it is only when our own chances of happiness are gone by, and wrecked for ever, that we reap the bitter knowledge which would teach us to hoard and to enjoy them to the utmost. Such is man—still turning to the future rather than the present hour. How much real enjoyment we miss by overlooking that we really possess, and dwelling upon that which is never to arrive for us!

At last, however, that storm which could not be foreseen by Herbert because it was not to be detected in the aspect of the clouds, or those material portents which his life had been spent in studying, broke on them. Even the father, who had far less excuse for such blindness, was himself taken by surprise, so useless are those lessons which ask us to be wise, however frequently they may be repeated.

At the close of one of the most lovely days that it is possible for Nature to grant, or human being to enjoy, Herbert had returned, in a perfect transport of delight, from one of those long and delicious rides in which he was entrusted with the care of *Nautila's* safety, and she became his guide for the purpose of pointing out to him everything worthy of observation in the neighbourhood. Little dreaming of any danger at hand, our hero, as he had always heretofore done, renewed his dress for dinner, and hurried down to the table.

It struck him once or twice that some additional gloom appeared upon the old man's brow; but, in the fulness of his own joy, he scarcely tried to notice whether he were correct in this observation or not. The evening passed as all its delightful predecessors had

done; they sang, they played, strolled in the starlight, and finally separated for the night with some fresh engagement for the morrow. It also struck Herbert that the father was rather peremptory in ordering his daughter to her rest at an hour considerably earlier than usual; but, as he complained of illness, and was altogether a sort of person whom few prospective sons-in-law would wish to cross, our hero dutifully gave way without much remonstrance, saw Nautila retire to her room, and then sought his own.

Somewhat fatigued with the long ride, he soon fell asleep. How long he had enjoyed his repose he knew not; but being aroused by some hand upon his shoulder, he looked up, and there beheld his host sitting by his side, and evidently in the same dress in which he had quitted the dinner-table.

There was a stern gravity in Mr. St. John's demeanour, which, even before he had spoken, filled Herbert with a sort of prophetic awe.

"What the devil is coming now!" thought our hero: but on this point he was speedily enlightened.

"Will you oblige me by sitting up and fully awakening yourself," said the old man.

Herbert once more rubbed his eyes.

"What is the matter, sir?"

"I will soon tell you, when once I am assured that you are in a condition to understand what I have to say. Are you perfectly awake?"

"Certainly I am, sir."

"Where was it you told me your adopted father lived?"

"At Boston, sir," replied Herbert, wondering what this had to do with the question.

"On what day of the month did he first see you?"

"On the fifteenth of December."

"What was the Christian name of your adopted mother?"

"Emmeline."

"Very good. I will now proceed—you are fully awake. Attend to me. I hold in my hand a letter, which I have recently received in answer to one of several, which, as I once hinted to you, I wrote to various parties for the purpose of finding out whether others gave the same account of you that you gave of yourself. An unfortunate accident has delayed the arrival of the last of these for nearly a week; but in this letter I am informed that, at a gentleman's dinner-table at New York, the name of myself and my daughter were mentioned, my daughter as a young woman of considerable beauty, myself as an eccentric, that had shut his doors upon the world. I am told that you then made a bet, within a certain space of time to obtain an entrance into my house, to eat at my table, to sleep under my roof, and to form an acquaintance both with my child and me."

As the old man said this, he fixed his gaze on Herbert with a

cold, resolute, determined eye, that seemed to penetrate to our hero's very heart, and leave an icy, sickening chill, that nothing could remove. The charge, too, came upon Herbert at a moment and in a manner which left him so wholly unprepared with an answer, overtook him, in the full zenith of happiness and success, with such a cruel, retributive vengeance, that he felt himself, as it were, staggering beneath the blow, his pulses ceasing in their play, and every feeling indicating the probability of a fainting-fit.

He tried to frame some answer, but language mocked at the command. He would have implored pardon—forgiveness—anything; but not one word could he utter. Some dreadful obstruction seemed to rise in his throat; his lips became so parched, he could scarcely move them; and, in the most intense agony, he sank back upon his pillow. The old man remained by his side, shading his features from the light which fell full on the handsome lineaments of Herbert, now pale as the linen on which they rested.

Overpowered as our hero felt himself to be, he could still perceive the large tears bursting into light beneath the gray, shaggy penthouse of the old man's eyebrows, and coursing one another rapidly down his cheek. This alone was wanting to complete Herbert's agony. When he felt how deeply he must have wounded a heart which the world had already wrung to breaking, he almost cursed himself aloud; but neither spoke a word.

After some minutes the old man rose, and, walking slowly from the room, paused at the door, turned round, looked once more at Herbert, and, with his hand waving a faint motion of adieu, thus finally departed.

Our hero's first motion was to start from his couch, to hurry after the old man, and at once implore his pardon; but then he remembered that it was with no ordinary mortal that he had to deal, and perhaps his very step making a commotion in the house might only offend him more; and this view of the case was also strengthened by a reflection on the season which had been chosen for the old man's visit.

"Perhaps," exclaimed Herbert, "he does not even wish his daughter to know how grossly her future husband has committed himself. Her future husband! Alas! how shall I ever forgive myself, if this unfortunate discovery were to—— But, no; stern as he is, he is too sensible so fearfully and doubly to punish an indiscretion in which only one is guilty; and, after all, an indiscretion that is merely attributable to a boyish love of frolic, rather than anything more serious. Any other person, it is true, might feel a point of pride in disappointing one who had ventured to make a wager on his want of skill in detecting an innocent trick. Whatever may be the faults of the old man, he is too dead to the opinion of the world, and despises it too heartily, to be influenced by such small vanity. No; the first thing to-morrow morning I will hurry to him, at once confess my folly, and implore his pardon,

—less for my own sake than that of his child! Surely, when I point out to him the cruelty that would exist in making her pay the penalty of my misconduct, he will at once forgive me; and this cloud blown over, how assiduously will I guard for the future against the rising of any other!”

Here Herbert mutely repeated a number of very eloquent and argumentative speeches, all to be delivered to Mr. St. John on the ensuing “morrow,” if such a dose should prove requisite; and with these magnificent arguments still muttering on his lips—to be supported, if necessary, by the auxiliary supplications of Nautila—he fell into a deep slumber, quite convinced that pardon, and fresh joy of every sort, would await him on the “morrow.”

CHAPTER XVIII.

“To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,

Have lighted fools to dusky death.”

SHAKESPEARE.

WHEN Herbert opened his eyes on the morning following the eventful night described in our last chapter, the sun was streaming broadly in at the window. He opened the lattice, and the fresh breeze of morning stole upon him, perfumed with the sweet breath of the clematis, and musical with the numerous voices of the feathered inhabitants of the forest.

Looking out upon the lawn, where the long shadows of the trees pointed from east to west in the colourless rays of the morning light, our hero fully expected to have seen the graceful form of Nautila, for it was already past the hour when she usually made her appearance for the day.

Saving, however, the long sweet trill poured forth by the birds, the gentle whisper of the rising breeze, and the distant murmur of the waterfall, all was perfectly still. A sense of ill weighed heavily at his heart, and anxiously he hurried forward his toilet and hastened down stairs. Here, where he had been always accustomed to meet every sign of life, everything was as silent as in the garden. He looked into each of the sitting-rooms, and in one, to his surprise, breakfast was laid out as profusely and as

luxuriantly as he had ever seen it. But how his heart sunk as he noted the difference—no longer for three parties, but for *himself alone*!

What could that portend? Hastily closing the door, he hurried into the servants' kitchens. No one was there. Mr. St. John's household had only consisted of the housekeeper, Mrs. Cerberus, and one negro, and both were gone!—even the shutters of the window had not been withdrawn, and all remained in darkness. He listened to detect, if possible, the movements of any one getting up. None were to be heard. Nothing but the tick—tick—tick of the clock near him spoke of man or mortality throughout the house.

A vague and indistinct sort of fear haunted him, but it was too horrible for him to admit its credulity! Some imperfect remembrance then flitted across his mind of sounds heard during the night; but this, of course, was a matter from which he could draw no distinct inference. Even then he more than suspected the truth of what had really happened, and yet had not the courage to confirm his suspicions.

Sitting down on the stairs, and burying his face in his hands, he for some moments gave way to the keen reproaches that assailed him. How he had murdered his own happiness! Surely, on no man had ever beamed promises of earthly felicity so brightly as on himself, and all, all had been lost by his own folly and misconduct!

"Why, why," cried he, "did I ever enter on that cursed bet! and yet had I not done so," he added, "I should never have seen *Nautila*! Better, rather, then, never to have seen her, than, seeing and knowing all her worth, have to endure the agony of a separation—and such a separation as this! But, no; strange being that he is, he cannot have been so inhuman as to have inflicted that agony on his own daughter; Why, why, did I not rise last night? Why could I not have hastened after him, and never have left his side till he had given me his pardon! His word once passed, I know that is a matter which he never would permit himself to violate."

As Herbert uttered these vain self-reproaches, and came to this conclusion, he remembered, with a start, the positive manner in which his host had dilated on his own love of truth.

"Had I only thought of this last night, I should then have seen how serious my offence would appear in his eyes. Stay! any thing is better than this torturing suspense. If their horses are in the stable, all may yet be well; and if his are gone, no power shall prevent me from following on mine, and tracking out their route. They have only had a few hours' start of me. I will drop with fatigue but I will light upon their track somewhere."

Starting to his feet, he hurried in the direction of the stables. The door was locked, but in this state it was always kept. He looked in the customary place for the key—that was gone. Sus-

picion seemed darkening into certainty. Running round to the end of the shrubbery, he dashed a hole through a few panes of glass, which enabled him to command a view of the whole range of stalls. To his utter consternation, not only were his host's horses gone, but his own likewise.

"Then I am even cut off from pursuit!" cried Herbert, almost frantic from mingled feelings of rage and grief; "I'll go on foot. Alas! that is impossible—let me see. O, what could I do on foot when the nearest house is six miles distant, if a yard! Let me see," passing his hand agitatedly along his forehead, and striving to cheat himself back to hope; "did the horses want shoeing? or have they been taken to the fords? But this is nursing hope against all evidence. It is too plain what has happened. I will go and knock at the old man's sleeping room; and if he be not there, then, as far as I am concerned, all is over. Nay, to terminate all doubt, I will at once go and see if Nautila gives any answer to my summons. Surely at least, whatever the old man may feel, she cannot be so cruel, so heartless, as to leave me in my misery."

From the stable accordingly Herbert proceeded once more to the cottage, and, going direct to the father's room, there commenced upon the door that species of tattoo which, right or wrong, has been by name at least assigned to his satanic majesty. To all appearance, not only might Herbert have beat the devil's tattoo there undisturbed for a considerable space of time, but even the prince of darkness himself might have drummed his knuckles on the door up to this period, without having received any satisfactory answer.

On turning the handle of the lock, the door at once yielded; and not only did the room appear untenanted, but the most indubitable proofs were at hand that the old man's couch had not been pressed that night by any occupant. From this chamber Herbert, in a state of distraction, proceeded to that of Nautila; and here the same result awaited his inquiries; till at last Nature, overcome by all she had been called on to endure, gave way, and our hero fell fainting on the floor of his mistress's bedroom.

When consciousness returned, and Herbert comprehended what had happened, he once more closed his eyes in order to reflect as to what course he should now pursue. Not even his wildest hopes could suggest any contradiction to the palpable fact, not only that he was deserted, but that every step had been taken to prevent his discovering either where his mistress had been carried, or finding out any mode of following her. Of this also he was unhappily convinced—that she, more or less, was a consenting party to the treatment he had experienced. This indeed it was that added the last and final bitterness to the poisoned chalice—to think that she should desert him unheard, almost unaccused, thus suddenly, and without affording to the man whom she had recently professed so faithfully to love, the least opportunity of defence.

"Of little value," exclaimed he, "can be the affection of such a bosom, highly as I prized it yesterday. Is she even worth pur-

suing? And yet, if I abandon her at once, should I not be myself guilty of the cruelty which I charge to her? Who can tell what inducements, what threats, may have been used, what account may have been given to her?"

Here involuntarily Herbert could not but admit that, whatever threats might have been used, her father, however indignant, was the very last person even in the most trivial matter to aggravate the truth.

"And, God knows, that is bad enough!" admitted our hero. "If she is gone, and if we are never to meet again, I will not take to my heart the unmanly consolation of affecting to think unworthily of one who has hitherto worn in my eyes perfection's brightest colours, and whom, if I condemn her in her absence, I may perhaps wrong most cruelly. Let me strive to hope that this sudden step of her father is intended rather for some fresh ordeal of my own conduct, than as a permanent desertion."

Struggling thus to cheat himself into this creed, our hero now commenced a melancholy ramble through the lawn and gardens, partly with the notion of paying a farewell visit to each cherished haunt in which he had experienced so much of vanished happiness, and partly in the hope of espying out some evidence confirmatory of the more lenient view of his case by the old man, with whom he well knew the doctrine of rewards and punishments to be a favourite system.

Thus inconsistently mourning, bewailing, and denouncing himself, our hero continued to wander on until the sun, appearing in the south, proclaimed it noon. Up to this moment, everything remained as profoundly still and forsaken as on the earliest moment of his awaking.

At first Herbert had hoped that the negro would return to communicate to him some intimation of the intention of his master; but, as no one came, he now began to consider the probability that the old gentleman was really earnest in allowing Herbert to remain in utter and continued ignorance of what had become of him, and had resolved to commit the cottage and all that it contained to ruin and decay, rather than furnish to one whom he wished to shun the slightest knowledge of his future locality.

As Herbert reflected on the singular and determined character with which he had to deal, he felt convinced that this was far from an impossible resolution for the old man to adopt. From many things that had come to his knowledge during the familiar intercourse they had of late maintained, Herbert was too well aware that considerations of a pecuniary kind had not the slightest weight with his secluded host; and if the cottage, grounds, and all that they contained, should sink into the lake, so far as the mere loss was concerned, it never would be a matter which would call forth another thought from their proprietor. The only ground that now existed for hoping that his late host had not wholly abandoned his dwelling, was the belief that it still contained many articles of

trivial value, rendered dear to their owner by association—a spell that he well knew to possess a powerful hold upon the old man's fealty.

On the other hand, true though it might be that the sight of these things a few days back brought pleasant images to the mind of their owner, they must now, for the future, also recall to him particulars of a passage in his life, in which, to use the mildest terms, his judgment had been at fault, and himself deceived. The very cause, therefore, that once made him esteem these trifles, would for the future render them odious.

This last argument, therefore, was one that applied both ways, so not much reliance could be placed on that; but when the day stole on, and no one came, Herbert began to consider the possibility of his being left in the cottage to manage how he might; and though grief and love are potent emotions, there is a certain part of the frame which is called the master of arts, and which Spencer has denominated "the stomach."

In short, Herbert began to feel exceedingly hungry; and, foreseeing the possibility of his having to depart from the villa on foot, in search of the flying occupants, he determined to avail himself of the good cheer set forth by way of breakfast. What happened to him here may serve as a good lesson to all sentimentalists.

Had he only taken this sensible step a few hours earlier, he would have been spared much needless annoyance, for on the table lay, folded and directed for himself, a letter, which had escaped his attention in the agitation that before possessed him. It was in the well-known hand of the old man. He hastily opened it, and read as follows:—

"SIR,—After the opinion which you heard from me a few nights since on the comparative regard I entertained for truth or falsehood, the contents of this epistle can convey no surprise to you. I have just returned from your chamber, where I went to ascertain whether you could possibly have been guilty of making the bet I imputed to you. It is unnecessary to add, that your conduct leaves not a doubt upon my mind that the whole charge is true. I am glad, for your sake, that you sought neither to deny nor to palliate your conduct. After what has passed, however, you must be well aware that the projected union of my child is impossible. You may, perhaps, be inclined to ask, what difference it can now make how your introduction into my family took place?

"My answer is—None, certainly; but my objection is on a totally different ground—it goes entirely to your credit and principle.

"Start not when I tell you that a man who could practise the deception by which you befooled a sorrowing old father and an innocent young girl, neither of whom had ever either offended you, or laid themselves open to such familiarity at your hands, is the last person—whatever his other qualities may be—to whom I would willingly confide the only real treasure I possess on earth in the protection of my daughter's happiness.

"You will, I trust, do me the justice to remember that I am, of all men, a party most likely to keep my word; and, in consideration of the wrong you have inflicted upon me, and the readiness I expressed to forward your happiness as long as it was consistent with my child's, I look to you to make this last atonement—namely, that of forbearing any further the pursuit of that marriage we lately contemplated.

"Of this be assured, that, whatever may be my daughter's feelings, you shall never marry her without my consent, and that your own act has rendered it impossible for me to yield. I have taken the liberty of borrowing your horse for the day; it will be returned to you to-morrow: after which you are fully welcome to use the cottage for as long a period as you may think fit.

"I utter no reproaches, and I give you no advice; for the mind incapable of being taught by its own errors is lost to every minor sermon.

"Still you have the best wishes of myself and child for your future happiness; and I can only regret that you have yourself prevented our contributing towards it.

"CHARLES ST. JOHN."

CHAPTER XIX.

"And often I find myself uttering her name, forgetful for a moment that she is lost to me, while more than once, both in my sleeping and in my waking hours, I have started to hear her well-remembered tones pronouncing mine with a distinctness I could at first scarcely believe to be imaginary. These, then, I suppose, must be—'Those airy tongues that syllable men's names.'"

Scott's Diary.

We cannot say that, after the perusal of the letter contained in our last chapter, our hero had much appetite remaining for his repast. Proud and high-spirited as he was, we admit it to have been gulped down with many sighs, and not a few bitter tears.

This was the first serious calamity that had overtaken him in life. The ordinary disappointments which men meet amid this world's rough knocks had, of course, been his; but to have drawn this calamity on himself was indeed most galling.

Regret, however, could bring him nothing but experience for the future. His business was to decide on what he should do now.

The first grand question was, whether he should, as the father suggested, at once abandon all further pursuit of Nautila? This course, too, was asked in such a manner, that, clever as he was, he scarcely knew how to evade a request so moderately made. At length, affection suggested that so hard a favour ought never to have been solicited at his hands, and that it was utterly unreasonable in old St. John to expect his compliance with it.

"No," whispered love, ever fertile in such extremities; "I may at least be permitted to demand one interview, in order to have my dismissal confirmed by herself! If she, indeed, discards me, then all is over; but without her personal denial of my suit—no, I cannot relinquish it. On the instant that my horse returns, I will mount, and neither by day nor night will I ever rest until I find some clue to the retreat to which he has so cruelly carried her! If she is, indeed, determined to adopt her father's view in this case, there can be the less objection to my hearing it from her own lips!"

Comforted by this resolution, though still not without some suspicion that he was acting rather ungenerously towards the father in not at once acceding to the request he made, Herbert, in order, if possible, to get rid of his own thoughts, and wile away the dreadful tedium till his horse should be returned, rushed down to the boat-house, got the lines and other apparatus ready, and, pulling off to the accustomed fishing-ground, endeavoured to tranquillize his mind by the excitement of sport.

But the effort only partially succeeded; every instant some fresh remembrance of Nautila came to disturb the quiet for which he hoped; and gladly indeed did he welcome the long, red, slanting rays, marking the return of night.

As he replaced the boat, he called aloud the servant's name, hoping that he might have returned; but, on landing and repairing to the stable, these hopes vanished once more. Then he had to prepare dinner for himself, but under circumstances how different from those of his former essay! Wearied at last with watching and lamenting, he at length sought his pillow as the only place of refuge.

Sleep came—but, alas, it was but to renew his sorrows; the image of Nautila was perpetually hovering round him, and ever as he attempted to address her, some mocking voice, seeming to wear the tones of the old man, pealed forth discordant laughter, while the fair figure of his child not only eluded the lover's grasp, but appeared cold to all his entreaties, and gave back no reply.

In this wretched state of misery, to which all the sorrows incident to both slumber and watchfulness were added, Herbert's night passed. He awoke soon after daybreak, and lay mournfully thinking over the dismal prospect of the future, when suddenly a sound of horses' hoofs, moving at a slow trot, came like notes of some long-lost but favourite melody to his ear.

Starting at once from his couch, he ran to see who the new

comer might be, and, to his great joy, found it was the free negro on our hero's horse, which appeared to have undergone very considerable fatigue since it had last left the stables of the cottage.

"Where have you come from, Philadelphia?" eagerly demanded Herbert, running out of doors destitute of clothing as he was, in his eagerness to gain some information. The only reply the negro gave was one of his wide grins, which seemed to display a set of teeth that appeared almost to go round his head, much less to his ears.

"Where have you come from, Phil?" in the most impetuous voice repeated Herbert. "Why can't you answer me when I ask you?—here have I been expecting you every moment since this time yesterday morning." A second grin was the only reply to this.

"Why don't you tell me, Philadelphia?"

"Massa, no please to ask no questions."

"Why, sir?" demanded Herbert, scarcely able to articulate with anger and eagerness.

"Because, den, Philadelpy no tell massa no lies."

"Has any one told you not to tell me?"

"Sare, you must know ver well Massa St. John sure to tell me not to tell you."

A great lie, by the way; for Massa St. John was far too good a judge of human nature to rely on such a mere chance of concealment. However, when Herbert had got this answer, he darted back to his room, and returning with twenty dollars—

"Here, Phil," cried he, extending the money on his palm, "here are twenty dollars; tell me all you know, and these are yours."

Delight sparkled in the negro's cunning eye as he beheld the money. Peering over the other's hand, so as to inspect the coin minutely, he replied,—

"Massa make fine jest of poor Philadelpy."

"Jest! Zounds, fool, will you drive me mad?" shaking the money as if he would throw it at the other's head. "Look at my sleepless eyes and unshaved beard, and tell me if I look like a man inclined to jest; tell me all you know, and take the dollars."

"Tell all and take de dollars. Ah, massa! and when Philadelphia tell you all, you no gib him de money."

"Wretch! knave! fool!—Do you think I would take you in?"

"Him take in Massa St. John, perhaps him take in me—'cm sham dollars, massa."

"Idiot! feel them and ring them; take them and tell me all you know."

With eager clutch Philadelphia extended his huge dark paw, and, receiving the coin, took Herbert at his word, deliberately knelt down upon the ground, and rang one or two pieces of the silver on a stone, then, as if satisfied with the test, rose from his position, exclaiming,—

"Dem bery good dollars, massa—bery."

"And now, sir, what do you know?" again asked Herbert, giving up the money.

"Notink, massa."

"Nothing, you scoundrel—why, did you not leave the cottage yesterday with your master?"

"No, massa, Philadelphy sent away overnight on foot to the Black-fall."

"Then how came you by my horse?"

"A stranger brought him to Philadelphy, at the Black-fall Inn, late last night. Massa told Philadelphy to wait till your horse was brought him, and den to bring him back here."

"And what account did the man give who brought my horse?"

"He said a friend ob his gave him to him seven miles beyond. I pay him two dollars of Massa St. John's money for bringing de horse as Massa St. John ordered me. Is Massa St. John not here?"

"No, you scoundrel, you know that."

"No, sar, Philadelphy only guess it."

"And is this all you know?"

"Ebery word, sar; so help him——"

"Spare yourself the trouble of false oaths. Has your master given you no orders about keeping the house for him until he comes back?"

"No, sar, not at all."

"Then," muttered Herbert, "he will either return himself shortly, or send some person with instructions to this pretty specimen of plain dealing how to act in his absence. Yet, why should I complain of his fidelity?—It would be hard, indeed, if his interest should not be protected by one who has not only eaten his bread for years, but owes his freedom to the old man's generosity. Here, Philadelphia, never mind my having spoken to you harshly—I have been grievously afflicted, and even now am so ill that I can scarcely walk. Give my horse some bran-gruel, and make him up as well as you can for a long journey—I shall be with you presently."

These orders were punctually obeyed; and within half an hour Herbert, with the heaviest heart he had ever known, set forth, determined, if such a thing were possible, to search out Nautila, but utterly at a loss to discover what route she and her father had taken.

Let them have gone whither they would, it was quite clear they had got a clear six-and-thirty hours' start. In a country like the United States, with its long railroads and vast lakes, this was an immense advantage. Still the very difficulty of the chase added to the excitement, and tended in some degree to win him from himself.

With all his despair, there was still, lover-like, some sort of *prestige* upon his mind, which rendered him, in the depths of his

own soul, confident that, under some circumstances or other, he should, sooner or later, meet with his lost mistress.

Then also arose the frightful image that represented him forgotten, cast aside, her affection, and perhaps her person, given to another. The thought was too agonizing for endurance, and, dashing his spurs into the fiery animal he rode, the noble creature darted into full gallop, and soon left behind him that secluded cottage where had passed the happiest hours that Nautila and Herbert were doomed perhaps ever in life to know.

CHAPTER XX.

“ Call back the dreams that blest your early youth !

But all in vain, for never love, arraying
Nature in charms, to thee can make her fair.
Ill-fated love clouds all thy path, portraying
Days past of bliss, and future of despair ! ”

Glenarvon.

HERBERT'S clue to the recovery of our heroine being for the present effectually blinded, it now occurred to him that it would be no bad device to seek out, if possible, the party who had betrayed the intelligence of his bet, and, if there existed the slightest pretence for such a proceeding, to bring him to the condign punishment of the *duello*.

Moreover, he thought it not impossible that, through the same channel which had conveyed news of the bet to Mr. St. John, he might himself obtain some tidings of the old man's abiding-place.

Before, however, he set off on this expedition, he reined his steed, and drew forth the back of an old letter, and, on the top of his hat, sketched out a slight chart of the cottage and the various roads by which any one could have access to or egress from it.

According to his recollection, these were but three in number, and he devoted that day and the next to riding so many miles on each, until he came to the nearest house where any tidings of the travellers could be obtained.

By the next day at noon he had ridden ten miles on each of

these several roads, which, with ten back, made sixty. But not the slightest intelligence, or anything that might be an auxiliary to intelligence, could he gain.

It then occurred to him that the lake might have been used as a means of landing the party on some road with which he was unacquainted, and, despairing at any rate of now hitting on their trail, he directed his horse's head at once towards the city where the ill-fated bet had been made.

On reaching his destiny, and detailing his adventures, he was warmly congratulated on the successful issue of his wager, and, though his host denied having ever breathed the secret either with that large inducement to repetition, "strict confidence," or otherwise, he found that it had for some days past formed one of the ninety and nine subjects of gossip in a large circle.

His friend strongly dissuaded him from the ridicule of attempting to bring to account the party who had divulged the bet, and, ignorant how deeply his feelings were concerned, advised him to laugh off the whole matter, and to claim his wager.

This, however, Herbert very properly declined; he was determined that, to all his other transgressions, there should not at least be added the making a profit by the distress and annoyance he had brought into the family of his late host; and, receiving his friend's promise that he would remain on the alert to gain the slightest intelligence, Herbert once more set out for the cottage, to learn if the negro had yet received any instructions from his absent master.

On arriving at the now desolate and deserted scene, he found that, a few nights after his departure, a short note had been slipped under the door, containing these words, written in a hand sufficiently large for the negro to read:—

"My absence will be greatly prolonged. Till I come back, cultivate the ground for your own benefit, keep the cottage in the best repair you can, and, when you have occasion for any money, if you will open my small writing-desk, you will find notes sufficient for your use."

It was now evident that to look for any clue to the discovery of Nautila near the cottage was vain; and, beyond that neighbourhood, how alarmingly wide was the circuit through which he might have to travel for his intelligence!

To say nothing of the vast area of the United States, her father might have passed the frontiers, and gone into Canada; or even now, resigning in disgust his peculiar notions that his daughter's happiness would best be consulted by contracting for her some comparatively humble marriage, they might already be on their way towards the island which had first witnessed her birth, and with some of the best families of which he had now no doubt she was connected.

The prospect of his proposed search was rapidly losing the excitement it had once possessed, and degenerating into a dull,

hopeless despair. Forced to acknowledge that he was now reduced to chance for any intelligence he might gain, he at length mounted his horse with a feeling akin to indifference; throwing the reins on its neck, as he applied his heels to its side, he allowed his once unrivalled favourite to bound forward whither he pleased.

To attempt anything like a description of the will-o'-the-wisp chase Herbert pursued for the next six months would be idle. In every direction of the United States he bent his course: twice he returned to the cottage, but utterly in vain. Now he fancied he possessed some clue to the retreat of the St. Johns, and again all hope vanished, as he pursued the phantom. At last, in pure despair, he had taken up his residence in one of the far western states; his health had suffered severely by the constant fatigue and anxiety he had imposed upon it, and, with no other view than that of resting himself, had he now paused in his present location.

One morning a letter was brought to him, almost illegible from the number of directions and re-directions that it bore. On opening it with a feeling of indifference—for most of his letters had of late been similarly overscored—his heart, to use a commonplace vulgarity, “almost leapt into his mouth,” as his eye rapidly scanned the following lines:—

“DEAR HERBERT,—The most extraordinary chance has at length furnished me with a clue that will, I am sure, lead you to hitting upon the trail of your old man and young maid. I was going a few days since with a party of friends over the beautiful cabins of the celebrated *Atlantic* steamer, when, by chance, and without the least intention of playing the eavesdropper, I heard a person ordering the best apartment in the ship for a lady and gentleman. Some little debate occurred as to whether the name should be given; and, never dreaming that the question could be of the slightest importance to me, I allowed the words to enter my ears almost without noticing that we were within ear shot. The stewardess said something about it saving her trouble to put down a name, whether the right one or not; for, as the cabins desired were the best state-rooms in the ship, she would be certain to be pestered to death if the number was left blank. ‘Well, then,’ said the stranger, ‘you may put down Mr. and Miss Snooks.’ The stewardess took up the pen, and wrote down the name with some laughing remark, to which she added, ‘Oh, then, they are not husband and wife!’—‘No,’ said the other, ‘he is some rich old codger, and she is his daughter; they are some great English people, travelling incog., I reckon. But that’s the way with these Britishers; they always pretend to spare their modesty by concealing their rank and titles when they come amongst us Yankees; but, still, somehow or other, they always contrive that the secret shall ooze out at some corner or other, for fear they should lose any of the bowing or scraping, which they might otherwise be entitled to!

Here—here's the passage money, in hard dollars. Pray put paid against the name; though I dare say this Count Fig, whoever he is, with all his pretended incognito, won't be over-pleased when he finds that I have entered him as Mr. Snooks; then adding in a lower voice, 'I hate all such mystery; one would think I was not to be trusted; why not send in his proper name at once?'

"The stewardess here put paid on the books, and the man, whoever he was, returned to his pocket the empty dollar-bags and departed. I tried to enter into conversation with him, but could not succeed, without making my object evident. From what I saw of the party, I conclude he is only used at third or fourth hand, and, in reality, has not the slightest idea for whom he has been engaged. This is very slender evidence, you will say, to justify my building so strong a presumption upon it as to the identity of Mr. and Miss Snooks with your friends. Still, if you have nothing better to do, it might be worth your while to make a visit to the *Atlantic* steamer, and see if you can discover anything more certain. If you decide on this, you must be quick in your movements, since I am told she sails in a few days—I believe the eleventh of March. Any service that I can afford, you may at any time command by writing."

CHAPTER XXI.

"Gallant captain, daring crew,
Ah! what fortunes threaten you!
Clear as heaven now brightly smiles
An ocean dimpled o'er with isles.
Calm, and bright, 'tis fearful still—
Could you lift the veil of ill!"

DERWENT.

On reading the foregoing letter, all dejection and inactivity on the part of our hero ceased on the instant. Springing to his feet with a lightness of heart he had not known for many days, he at once gave the orders necessary for his departure.

"Call this slender evidence!" said he. "Zounds! what would the worthy man require? I see the whole thing as plain as can be; this is just such a kind of manœuvre as old St. John would practise. Taught by the sad experience of the world that no one

is ever secure against treachery, he takes the only precaution that can guard him against it, namely, by not allowing his sub-agents to be possessed of any intelligence to betray. Still, however, there is danger in that plan, as the result shows. But now once more for the road. Sails on the 11th of March—grass must not grow beneath my feet, that's quite clear."

In less than an hour Herbert was on his horse; and, after many impediments which fretted his impatience almost to madness, he arrived at New York late on the night of the 10th of March.

Without pausing even for refreshment, our friend took a boat, and hurried off to the superb steam-vessel which lay in the harbour.

As the object of the captain was to start early on the ensuing day, our hero found numbers of the crew very busy in hoisting on board and stowing away various articles.

Every party being of course anxious to sleep on shore as long as possible, Herbert could scarcely find any person to give him the intelligence he desired.

The mate of the watch coolly told him that he knew nothing about the business of steward; and seemed to consider it infinitely beneath his dignity to know that there were such things as cabins or passengers in the world. At last it appeared that one of the under-stewards was sleeping on board, and, by dint of a bribe, Herbert got this man brought on the quarter-deck.

He now learnt, to his consternation, that every berth in the ship was occupied; and, as to a cabin, it would be impossible to get one for either love or money.

"But," said Herbert, "do you happen to know any gentleman who is going to whom it would be an object to get his passage free? Not that I so much care about roughing it, only my health is rather indifferent at present, and I would willingly pay the price of two passages, as well as pay you for effecting the arrangements."

The sound sense of this last proposition seemed to be very evident in the eyes of Herbert's hearer, who undertook to do all he could for him on the morrow, as soon as the passengers should come on board; and, in the mean time, guaranteed our hero a passage, if he chose to obtain a cabin in the manner proposed, and, failing that, to be content with a cot slung in the saloon.

As these were the best terms Herbert could make, he at once acceded to them; and slipping a couple of dollars into the man's hand, merely as a specimen of what was to follow if he succeeded in accommodating so sensible a party, he then ventured on one or two questions, intended to ascertain if anything had yet been heard of the fugitives he sought.

As Herbert expected, no person answering to the description had come on board, and, satisfied that he had taken every step in his power, our hero returned to the shore.

His next act was to call upon his friend, and hold a consultation

as to the course most advisable to be taken: no further trace had yet appeared of the *St. Johns*, and to both the consulters it became evident that great care must still be used.

The old man was too wary not to employ every means in his power to ascertain, before he took his daughter on board, that Herbert had obtained no clue to his intended departure; both were equally certain that, though the vessel were actually on the point of getting under way, such was the determination of the father, that, rather than give to our hero any chance of renewing his intimacy with Nautila, he would abandon everything on board and return to the shore.

It was agreed, therefore, that, whatever steps might be taken, one thing would be indispensable: that as soon as Herbert arrived on board the *Atlantic* he must manage to seclude himself from public view, so that neither Mr. St. John, nor any of his emissaries, who would no doubt be fully on the look-out for such a circumstance, should be able to detect him among the passengers.

"It would be a pretty affair truly, if, after taking all this trouble, and paying two passages to get a chance of sailing in the same ship, the old boy should get a hint of my design, throw up his own passage, and not come himself, and leave me to visit the old country alone, for my pains," said Herbert.

"That would be a high joke, certainly, upon you; as strong in its way as the laugh now runs against the old fellow himself, for letting you get into his house. The worst of the matter is, that as you are not able to secure a cabin, I don't see how you can so withdraw into strict privacy as to insure none of his agents seeing you."

"Well, at the worst, the whole affair is a risk, and I must run it. The only question is, how to run it most effectually, and with the least chance of discovery. It is quite clear I can't do without your aid in the business."

"That you shall have most cheerfully; but this proposed father-in-law of yours appears to be so wide-awake a dodger, that I have no doubt he is in perfect possession of my name and description as the party at whose house the obnoxious wager was laid; and I as little doubt also, that if I am seen on board the *Atlantic*, the instantaneous conclusion will be that you are not far off."

"Yes," said Herbert, "I fear that will be the conclusion; therefore we must at once get hold of some third fellow whom we can trust, and set him to work in this matter. Let me see, who is there? Oh, there's Major Symonds!"

"Ha! the brigadier would be just the fellow to do it! Let's go and knock him up."

"Wait a moment," said Herbert; "first let me arrange my plans.—I have it! Symonds shall go on board with my luggage, with some name, such as Thomas, or Brown, upon it, while I will delay my departure till the last thing, and then, dressed in a

simple blue jacket and a pair of canvas breeks, so as to look as much like a foremast-man as possible, I have no doubt I shall slip in during the hurry of getting under way without much attention. A bribe to one of the stokers, with a vehement thirst for knowledge as to the engineering department, will secure me a berth in the engine-room as looker-on during the start, and, once at sea, I can find my way into the cabin, and act accordingly."

"Ay, that seems a likely plan; but that leaves you no chance of slipping your cable and remaining on this side of the herring-pond, in case the St. Johns should not come on board; and this appears to me rather awkward. Suppose, for instance, we should have overstrained the evidence, and this said Mr. Snooks should turn out nothing more than a mere ordinary dealer in rum and molasses, with a half-caste daughter, her nose as broad as a pumpkin, and her lips as thick as a turnip, and a nice little curly lambswool-covered pate, her respectable mother attending upon them both in the shape of a fat old female nigger? in what a remarkably agreeable position you would find yourself placed."

"Why, you draw an agreeable picture truly; still, what remedy is there for it? If I were to linger about the cabin to ascertain the fact, it wouldn't make the case more hopeful, for then I think there can be little doubt of my being seen, and the whole plan rendered abortive."

"Just so; all that remains therefore to be done is this: Symond must take care and mind what he is about when he takes Mr. Thomas's luggage on board; he must call for his bottle of wine and breakfast, and get out of the stewards as much as he can; and you, in the engine-room, must take up such a post that you can see him pass along the gangway on deck. When you behold him make his appearance, flourishing about a white handkerchief, you will know that the old fellow has made his appearance, and that all is right."

"But, if when the vessel is about to start, he appears minus the cambric to wave you an adieu, you will understand that no Mr. St. John has arrived; in short, that old Snooks has taken the alarm, and carried off the fair young Snooks elsewhere. All that will then remain for you will be to exercise your own discretion, whether or not you will remain any longer on board."

"Yes, that plan will answer admirably; one thing is only necessary to be added to it. I must be sure, namely, to have one or two quick rowing-boats, attendant on the steamer, to come up when hailed; and now I will just lie down on your sofa and take an hour's nap; after that we will go and call up Symonds."

"Very good, and I will go and turn out my people to make the necessary arrangements, and provide some refreshment for you, as I am sure you must need it."

CHAPTER XXII.

“From Ballinacfad, many miles far abroad,
 Young Paddy one morning set out on his road;
 His shoulders were square, and his legs they were straight,
 And the hero peep'd out in his eye and his gait;
 His heart was as light as his purse, and his hand
 Was as hearty and heavy as Frenchman could stand:
 A girl, or a glass, or a foe, was his joy,
 And Paddy was sure, then, an illigant boy.”

“*The Uplands* ;” a Poem, by JOHN FEWTRELL WYLDE, ESQ.

THE day had not yet dawned, when, after considerable hammering, Mr. Rawlins, for such was the name in which Herbert's New York friend rejoiced, found his way into the bedroom of Captain Symonds, and thus commenced his *réveille*.

“Symonds, Symonds, my boy!”

“Holloa!” was drowsily muttered from beneath the coverlet, by the individual whose shoulder Rawlins was busy shaking.

“Symonds, you larking devil, awake, will you, if there's any drop of Irish blood in you! A friend has need of your services.”

“Ay! what! has he? I'm his man, then; and, by all appearances, it's a nice grey light for a satisfactory purpose. How did the quarrel arise? Is it between pistol-men or rifles?”

“Why, this is a rifling case, by all account; there's no quarrel in the matter yet, though there are great hopes of it when it comes into your hands to be properly managed. This is the case of a lady.”

“Then, unless she's young, beautiful, and rich, as sure as my grandfather and four uncles were hung for the Irish rebellion, I won't have anything to do with her.”

“Then you may make your conscience perfectly easy, for the lady in question is all three.”

“It inclines my mind towards her greatly.”

“And her father is the most stubborn dog that ever interfered with a loving gentleman's views.”

“Oh, then, I'm entirely at your service.”

And in an instant he had leaped from his recumbent position, and was already drawing on the primary articles of his apparel.

“Yes,” continued Rawlins, “the fellow is a regular Britisher, as obstinate a John Bull as ever sliced roast beef, or ordered a plum-pudding upon Christmas Day.”

“Oh, he shall have his pudding, sir, trust to me;—hand me

that bootjack. Oh, I beg your pardon, it was the razor I meant; and now, while I take myself from behind my beard, just oblige me by running over the facts, with as little circumlocution as possible."

Rawlins rapidly ran over these.

"It's a very proper case for our interference," said the gallant captain.

"I think so too," said Rawlins; "and I would myself have acted in the matter if I had thought it was compatible with avoiding the necessary risks of defeat; only I was sure you would not begrudge the trouble, though you don't happen to know Herbert as well as I do."

"Trouble, sir! nothing is a trouble where there is the least spark to promise an adventure; and as for trouble, not knowing your friend intimately, by the great O'Toole, if I had never seen the man, I should feel myself bound in honour to interfere under circumstances of such atrocity; indeed, I may add, in any case where a young lady herself is favourably inclined to receive the addresses of a gentleman, and is only prevented by the tinkering impertinent interference of a superannuated old fogie, who has no possible ground on earth to interfere, except upon the ridiculous presumption of calling himself her father. Whew! Fiddle! What the devil has he to do with it, I should like to know, but to give the young people a sufficient amount of the ready to start life genteelly."

"Oh, as to the ready in this case, there's no dispute about that. Herbert himself has got a very handsome independent property; he has himself a clear thousand a year; he doesn't want a penny from the old father."

"Do you really tell me so, Rawlins?"

"It's a fact! I know it."

"What! and he, the old thief, presumes to say that the young lady shan't marry who she pleases, and when she pleases?"

"He won't even allow them to see one another."

"By the great O'Toole, sir, my blood boils to think of such a thing! In the whole course of my matrimonial experiences—and I've helped at the running away of seven heiresses, two of them out of Spanish convents, though unluckily the devil a one yet on my own account—now I never yet heard of such an outrage upon the common principles of refined society as this case you mention. By this and by that, I only wish he had me for a daughter!"

"By Jove, I dare say you would astonish him certainly;—you Irishmen——"

"Bother take you, Rawlins! What is it alive, man, that you are always running your head against my being an Irishman? One would think, to hear you speak, that there was something about me that was like one, or a touch of the brogue, or something of that sort. True enough, there is a little of the old blood hanging about me in a few holes and corners."

"I beg your pardon, my dear Symonds, I forgot, at the time,

that you were born in Scotland; but to drop that question, let me caution you; you will have no child to deal with in this old man, little as you seem to think of him. He's a wide-awake old chap, and strongly as you may feel on the subject of his most improper control over his daughter's wishes, you must be sure and keep cool, or he will be certain to get the upper hand of you."

"Cool, my dear Rawlins! Do you think now I have been under fire, on public or private occasions, ever since I could look over a billiard-ball, by the help and assistance of a high-heeled pair of jockey-boots, and yet require to be told, at this time of day, the advantages of keeping cool? Let me alone to deal with him! If he doesn't find me as cool as a cucumber, I'm a Dutchman, notwithstanding I do, as you say, consider his conduct in this matter as about one of the most reprehensible things that ever came under my observation. Toss me that clothes-brush, Phil, that's a darling! But there, sir! they are all alike, these fellows calling themselves fathers, as soon, by Jove, as they have lost the relish for enjoying things themselves—by this and by that, they seem to think there's no help left for them but turning to and keeping from young ones those pleasures that have slipped by themselves! They are all alike, sir! and we shall never be better until we get a grand moral reform in the world, to which Lord John's bill, in the old country, shall be a mere bag of moonshine."

"And what would that be?"

"Why, sir, as soon as ever man, or woman, or child could be convicted of having arrived at the age of eight-and-forty—yes, I'd give them till eight-and-forty, and then, by the gods of war, I'd empanel a jury to try them for the offence! That once proved beyond all reasonable doubt, I'd ship them all off to some South Sea island or another, where they might all fight it out together. There is an island in the South Sea somewhere, isn't there, called Terra del Fuego, which, if I recollect anything of Spanish, means nothing more nor less than the Terror of Old Fogies, and there, by Jove, I'd send them! Oh, my lad, wouldn't we have pretty fun amongst the young ones, then! Well, now then, I'm your man; and if we don't end in singeing Mr. St. John, by the great O'Toole, why then I've made a mistake, and man never lived yet that was bold enough to convict me of that."

As the dutiful Captain Symonds came to this modest conclusion, he drew the arm of his friend Rawlins within his own, and they walked down stairs together, sought the house of the latter, and there found Herbert anxiously expecting their advent.

It must be confessed, our hero had sundry misgivings when he heard the gallant captain launch out into his very peculiar notions as to "old fogies," "fuddle-headed fathers," and so forth; but, having once enlisted him under their banner, it was far from an easy matter to discharge such a species of recruit; he therefore resolved to make the worst of a bad bargain, and endeavour, if possible, to keep his friend under some control.

Having again and again gone through the necessary instructions, Symonds forthwith set out upon his undertaking, as he himself had admitted, quite delighted to be engaged in any affair that promised an adventure; and by no means over-prudent as to his choice of it, nor ever calculating how he was to obtain the means of retreat; indeed, it would have seemed with him to be a maxim, that the very charms which adventure possessed half depended upon this material point being left in the greatest uncertainty.

And here, while he was finding his way on board the steamer, we may take occasion to say a word or two as to who and what he really was.

Whether his version of his birth in Scotland had any better foundation than his own account does not appear, but amongst Irishmen themselves he was always claimed in the most undoubted manner, with considerable raillery on their part, for what they termed his vain attempt to shake off the old country; and certainly his language and modes of thinking and acting gave the strongest corroboration to this view of the case.

The rest of his history in life did not either particularly contradict this. He had once held a subaltern commission in the English army, but some unfortunate quarrel compelled his retirement, under circumstances by no means either disgraceful or, on the other hand, agreeable.

He had then embarked for the Peninsula, as one of the Spanish legion, where he much distinguished himself, and, having gained the rank of brigadier-major, was unfortunately wounded and was invalided to England. Some prolonged exfoliation of bone induced his surgeon to recommend a complete change of climate and a sea voyage, when the same roving disposition that seemed always hitherto to have guided his inclinations induced him to visit America.

Here he amused himself with any chances that came upon the board, among which fell to his lot that of taking on board the *Atlantic* the baggage of our friend Herbert.

After a very merry breakfast, which all parties seemed greatly to enjoy, Brigadier Symonds departed; and as the ship was not yet to sail, Herbert, who in this respect acted on the authority of the officer on shore, delayed his joining to the latest possible moment.

In the meanwhile he had procured the dress of a foremast seaman, and in blue jacket, canvas trowsers, a little, low tarpaulin hat, and a long, flowing black silk neckerchief, all of which apparel no one knew better than himself how to put on with the jaunty, careless air that marks the true seaman, Herbert took leave of his friend Rawlins, promised to write him long and particular accounts in case of his sailing; and, finally, taking a shore boat, engaged it to lie off the gigantic steamer until summoned to bring him back to the land.

"You know, old boy," quoth Herbert to the waterman, "when

a man has to say good-bye, it's an awkward word that often sticks in his throat, so don't be alarmed at the first two or three splashes of the paddle-wheels: depend upon it, I shall stay on board till the last, and I'll pay you well for waiting. Mind, above all things, that you stick to me through thick and thin, and lie off on the larboard side until you hear me hail you by your proper name. What is it?"

"John Price."

"Very well, John Price; here's double your fare, and when you take me back to the shore, you shall have as much more."

The boatman promised most faithful obedience.

When the boat got alongside, Herbert nimbly ran up the gangway, and, among the number of persons on deck, easily passed unnoticed. Looking sharply round, he soon detected the gallant Major Symonds, and inquired whether there was any news.

"Devil a word!" was the reply. "Up to this blessed moment, Mr. Snooks has treated the steamer and all belonging to it with the utmost contempt."

"Very well, Symonds; mind you keep a sharp look-out. I shall be standing on the starboard side of the engine-room. I think that will be the best place, as they must board the steamer on the other side."

"Precisely so; the very arrangement."

"Mind you don't forget the signal, Symonds."

"Forget! Sir, I'll see you through—I'll see you through it, you may rely upon me," muttered the gallant soldier. "My advice to you is, that you dive below before we are seen conferring together."

Herbert replied by a silent nod, and, mingling with the throng, at once accosted one of the stokers; prevailing upon him, by means of that much reprobated luxury called money, and under a pretence of burning with a thirst of knowledge, he got himself admitted to the engine-room, in order that he might become acquainted with the various mysteries of "Tarn ahead!" "Stop her!" "Tarn astarn!" with other matters equally edifying.

CHAPTER XXIII.

“Huzza! we are going!
Our embargo's off at last:
Favourable breezes blowing—
Bend the canvas o'er the mast.
From aloft the signal's streaming:
Hark! the farewell gun is fired.”

BYRON.

WITH all that Herbert now had at stake, it may easily be imagined how difficult it must have been for him to play the unconcerned spectator; to appear the pleased admirer of hissing boilers, polished pistons, painted cranks, and greased connecting-rods, rendered the more interesting by the peculiar phraseology of the uneducated stokers around him.

Knowing right well the road to their hearts, however, and placing the full value upon the possession of their goodwill, his first step was one not altogether consistent perhaps with the utmost safety to the ship or to her crew, but still vastly conducive to the end he had in view. Pulling out some silver, he sent one of the men to the steward's cabin for a dozen of Guinness's bottled stout.

“Wherever a tar goes, my boy,” said he, addressing the stoker who had introduced him, “he likes to see the good old principle carried out, of every man paying for his footing before he enjoys it.”

This principle from Herbert was one right readily appreciated. The porter made its appearance. The chief engineer interdicted the present use of more than he thought his men could safely bear, and this was speedily quaffed to the health of the new comer, who was unanimously voted to be a chip of the old block.

Time drew on, and the hour for sailing was now close at hand. Herbert's pulse beat fearfully, and the feelings of suspense he endured no man could envy.

The question of his own life or death would have moved that intrepid bosom with infinitely less excitement than the question now about to be decided. The love which had glided on so peacefully when no obstacle opposed its course, flowed like a river which, however deep and rapid, runs with a calm surface while unimpeded. It is the let of rocks and sunken hollows which agitate its surface with rapids and produce a dangerous commotion.

Since the evening when the old man had suddenly appeared at

his bedside, through what fearful struggles had not Herbert passed? Worn almost to a shadow, his sunken cheeks, hollow eyes, and bloodless lips, could scarcely be recognized as belonging to the same brilliant-looking animal, buoyant with freshness, youth, and happiness, that had so warmly pressed Nautila to his heart on the last evening that saw them parted!

Now, after his eager search, his endless prayers, and hours of intense misery, was that adored being about to be restored, not to his arms, for some sad augury told him that he must yet pass through much before he could remove the obstacles still crowding on his path.

No; if she could only be once again given to his vision—if he might only again even behold her, he felt, in his present wretched state of uncertainty, that even for a blessing so comparatively small as this, he could willingly resign the life that had lately proved so burdensome to him.

Ah, what rapture was in the thought! dear as it was, he dare not linger on it; the agony of waking from such a dream to prove its falsehood would be so terrible! With every moment that now passed, his agitation increased. Iron-nerved as he knew himself to be when any corporeal ill was nigh, he now feared that his rude companions around must inevitably detect the tremor under which he laboured.

He endeavoured to mix in their conversation, and join in their jokes—to wear the careless air they wore; but it was a futile effort! In spite of all his endeavours, his eager, anxious, and excited eye would wander to the spot where, ever and anon, there strutted jauntily forward the gallant major of infantry, who, with his arms folded on his breast, and a slight ratan depending from his wrist by a long silken tassel, always gazed down into the engine-room, as if ruminating on the mighty genius of Watt, but ever looking, to quote the quaint but forcible image of old Peter Pindar, “as knowing as a jackdaw into a marrow-bone;” though, fortune help him, poor man, he was as solemnly ignorant of the difference between high and low pressure as any worthy officer of the land forces could desire to remain. His bumptious sort of air on more than one occasion called forth the jeers and laughter of the worthy stokers, who, like most men of their class and condition in life, were never loth to seize an opportunity of ridiculing their betters; a practice which, by the by, their betters are never slow to repay, not only by contemning them as slaves, but, not unfrequently, by doing much as a mass to perpetuate their slavery.

Not caring either one way or the other about their ribald jokes, Herbert only fixed his eyes upon the major on the occasion of each of these visits, with a hope of discovering the appointed signal of the white handkerchief. Alas, not a rag was visible!

Time, meanwhile, had steadily progressed. Passenger succeeding passenger had come on board; goods of all descriptions had been hoisted in, and stowed away; the loaded steamer was

already pressed down below her exact water-line. Still, and still, and still no Mr. Snooks, no welcome signal of the white *mouchoir*. Only a few more minutes remained, and then, happen what might, come or stay away who pleased, the splendid steamer would bound forth upon her trackless path.

As the time drew thus near, the important looks of the brigadier grew still more portentous. At every halt he made he crossed his arms upon his breast, raised himself upon his toes, and then again sunk with a loud sound down upon his heels, as much as to say—

“I told you I would see you through it, and so I will. We’ll soon find out what the devil this Mr. Snooks is made of!”

But still unfortunately Mr. Snooks did not come. This was the awkward part of it; and our hero, having waited as long as he possibly could, was unable at last to endure his frenzy any longer. He almost resolved, *coûte qui coûte*, whether discovered or not, to rush on deck, and have a word with the worthy major on his next appearance.

He had not long to wait. Presently the Terror of Fogies appeared, bearing on his countenance not only the impress of stern determination, but of excessive anger. He fixed his eyes directly on Herbert as if gazing on vacancy, and, while making a pretence of taking a pinch of snuff, made a slight motion, a sort of beckon, with the index finger of his right hand, which could have been observed by no one but an interested spectator.

This determined our hero in an instant. On some pretence of seeing when the ship was going to start, he quietly but quickly darted up the iron ladder leading to the deck, and looking round, beheld his friend, the “Terror of Old Fogies,” standing under lee of the great funnel. Hastening up to him, he no sooner came within earshot than the major broke forth with—

“By my honour, this is the most improper conduct that ever came to my knowledge in the whole course of my experience! I almost question, do you know, whether I shall not be obliged to make it a personal matter between the old fellow of a father and myself. The devil of a sign of Mr. Snooks, or the skin of Mr. Snooks——”

At this moment the captain of the *Atlantic* shook hands on the starboard gangway with some shore-going looking body, who instantly descended into his boat, the men of which rapidly got out their oars, and pulled away towards the quay.

This was indeed the ship’s agent, who had stayed on board until the last moment.

The captain looked for a few seconds after him to see that his gig was out of all danger, then, mounting the paddle-box, spoke a few words to a short, stout person in a blue rough coat, finally gave a slight wave of his hand to some one in the engine-room below, and a dull, heavy splash was heard in the water alongside, announcing that the paddle-wheels had been set in motion.

This sound, so important to Herbert and his companion, neither

of them heard. Knowing that it was the general custom in all steamboats to direct the engine by command of mouth, they had both, as it were, tutored their ears to watch for the sound of "Tarn ahead," or any other shout similar thereunto. But at present, even had this command been given, it is doubtful whether they would have heard it—certainly not Herbert; he was wound up to such a pitch of intense excitement, "the great globe itself" might have been dissolved without his noticing the operation, until he found himself dancing upon nothing, with still less to hold by.

CHAPTER XXIV.

"Hold! hold! Piston—hold; Mr. Boiler, stand fast;
Your hurry's as wild as a dream.
And you, Mr. Furnace, with your profane blast,
I am shocked, sir, to hear you blaspheme.
Why, how you are going, you strike me aghast!"
Quoth they—"This is going by steam."

DESPITE all his lectures on coolness, let it fairly be confessed, the major was not in a much more collected frame of mind than his companion.

"I tell you what, sir," said he, seizing the buttonhole of Herbert's jacket, and speaking in a low tone, but with much earnestness, "I have been thinking of this matter, while I have been walking this deck, in every shape and form, and by this and by that, you must take care, sir, that the whole thing isn't a blind from beginning to end."

"How do you mean?" exclaimed Herbert, hardly able from sheer agitation to bring his understanding to bear upon what the other was saying, or, indeed, any kind of argument to be deduced from it.

"Why, what I mean to say, sir, is this; ye say that this old man has the unlimited command of money, and is a devilish wide-awake, out-and-out sort of person."

"Yes, both he certainly is, one and the other."

"And raly up to a dodge or two, and no mistake? Then look you here, sir; suppose it should turn out after all that instead of intending to go out of America himself, he should merely intend to send you out of it."

"Oh, the thing is too laughable."

"And you think so, do you?"

"Yes, I do! what force on earth could compel me to leave America against my will."

"Ay, against your will! now you talk."

"Well, but how would he ever gain my consent to such a scheme?"

"Nothing so aisy."

"Don't think me such a fool."

"Softly, now, softly. You might be no fool either; take care that he isn't doing it at this very moment, and looking out yonder through one of those windows behind us, watching the time when this lilliputian teakettle shall carry you off to Old England. Don't you see the deep part he may have been playing?" and here the captain, with a most knowing smile, tapped two or three times with his forefinger, just as we have seen that exquisite actor, Farren, do on the stage, against the sonorous chest of his auditor.

The agonized breast of Herbert was in no state now to bear the humorous allusions of any calm spectator of his wayward fortunes. His whole mind was striving to catch what the other was driving at, but, from the confusion and over-tension of his understanding, he was wholly unable to perceive the slightest meaning in the brigadier's words.

"For the love of mercy, do explain what you mean."

"Be calm, now, be cool; just suppose yourself going under the enemy's fire, and you will be as cold as a water melon, in a moment. If your account of this old Trojan is correct, don't you see this old fellow will have his emissaries, his feelers, as it were, out everywhere. And doesn't he know that you have means to do the same? Won't he take it for granted, therefore, that for the next twelvemonths, since the time of your quarrel, not one of these large steamers will leave for England but you'll have your eye upon her, or at least have intelligence of every one who sails in her? What then so easy as for him to take a cabin occasionally for an unknown old man and his daughter, that might answer for himself and his girl, pretending to use a little mystery in the matter, yet taking mighty good care to let the mystery be seen through all the same; then, watching the chance of this getting to your ears, allowing you to come on board here in chase of him, he, of course, never appearing himself, and so letting you go fiddling off to England to find out too late that you have missed your aim, and must blow your fingers to get back again."

"In the meanwhile, he bundles off to some other ports, sails for Halifax or Heligoland, as the case may be, to take the chance of your meeting in the next world, for, by this and by that, it would be mighty improbable you should ever foregather again in this; and what's more—Stop! hollo! by the great O'Toole! why the craft's already under way, man! By the Lord of Innisfail! if we are not both as completely sold——"

The Irishman at once forgot those beautiful precepts he had so lately taught to his unwilling hearer, Herbert, and instead of being cold as a water melon, burst forth into a volley of oaths and imprecations, all showing the utmost anger, and which we care not to repeat.

Our hero, startled at the intenseness of his wrath, and the style of expressing it, looked in the direction to which Symonds pointed, and there to his horror beheld, flowing past the gangway, those white curving ridges of foam which not only bespoke the engine in full play, but the ship actually going six or seven knots an hour through the water.

At this moment darted through his bewildered brain a sort of conviction that the long rigmarole of his military friend was correct, that he was indeed duped, and concluded that he should now never again behold Nautila; and, worse than all, that he had himself put the last finishing stroke to the ruin of his hopes.

So frantic did he feel as for an instant to turn his eyes towards the gangway, with a vague notion of jumping overboard.

What should he do? Was it yet too late to leave the ship? Where was his boatman that he had paid to stand by him? Turning round on the larboard side to examine if John Price was anywhere in sight, his eyes lit upon an object that banished from his cheek the little colour his prolonged sufferings had left. His heart seemed to cease its motion, his knees trembled beneath him, he staggered back for a few paces, and instinctively clung for support to the shoulder of Major Symonds.

What then was the cheek-blanching sight of horror, what was this object that at once threw down his soul from her stanch throne? what, indeed, but the tall yet rounded outline of a beautiful girl, who stood gazing round her as if to take a parting glance at the shore she was then, perhaps, for ever leaving; while her companion, on whose arm she leant, gave directions to the steward as to what trunks should be struck into the hold, and what luggage would be required in his cabin.

The fair girl slowly turned her melancholy features round towards Herbert, suspense gradually deepened into certainty, and there before him stood, revealed at last—

NAUTILA, THE BELOVED.

CHAPTER XXV.

—"Stop the boat—I'm sick, O Lord!"
"Sick, sir; d—me! you'll be sicker
Ere you've been an hour on board."

BYRON.

"SHE is here! she is here!—all is right, Symonds!" convulsively exclaimed our hero, in a whisper, grasping his friend's arm as soon as he could in some degree recover his presence of mind. "Get you on shore with the pilot, and leave me to settle everything besides—a thousand thanks for your kindness, and pray say the same for me to Rawlins. I'll write by the first post. See, the father is turning this way: I must fly below, or he may still detect me in time for a retreat."

But, though Herbert addressed these parting instructions to his friend, and went through, as far as depended on our hero, the ceremony of shaking him by the hand, Herbert's eyes were too fascinated by the object before them to turn in any other direction; while, so lively was his dread of being espied by the father, that he no sooner beheld the latter about to turn round, than, with all the activity of a seaman, he sprang upon the ladder of the engine-room, and was out of sight in an instant. Thus he was prevented effectually from seeing how his "cool" friend was engaged, while he himself did not dare to return on deck again for some time.

Far differently, however, did the gallant brigadier act from the manner in which Herbert naturally supposed that he would proceed. As soon as he observed that the ship was going thus rapidly through the water, but one image seemed to possess Symonds's mind, and this was that the whole affair was a purposed trick on the part of the captain and old Snooks, for his personal insult; and though, of course, he felt wholly unable to assert this, as he did not possess the slightest possibility of maintaining such a position, still he proceeded to act upon it with as much undoubted certainty as if the whole thing had been laid before him upon deposition.

"Stop, sir! stop the ship!" cried he, breaking away in the most infuriated passion, as soon as Herbert had quitted his hand, and utterly unconscious of a single word which the latter had addressed to him; for, Irishman like, the first suspicion of an indignity offered directly to himself overwhelmed every other consideration.

"Why don't you do as I order you, sir? Why don't you stop the ship?" he bellowed once more to the mate, shaking his fist full in the face of that naval worthy, who replied to the insult by a contemptuous laugh and a considerable squirt of tobacco-juice towards the "Terror of Old Fogies."

This was the climax to the major's wrath. Totally ignorant of all self-control, and springing towards the offender very much in the style of a wild cat, he caught the worthy far somewhat off his guard for such an attack, and in an instant hurled him to the deck; and to save him all trouble of rising again to renew the conflict, at once most unceremoniously placed his foot upon the offender's neck.

Now, as the Terror of Fogies stood some six feet high, and was to the utmost muscular in proportion, it seemed very likely that Mr. Mate would for some time retain the unenviable position in which he had been so readily placed. But at this moment another gentleman came up to the scene of action, and with equal want of ceremony urged his shoulder against that of Symonds, and thus liberated the captive at his feet. The latter, nowise loth to regain an upright position, immediately made preparations for returning to the combat, until a waive from the hand of his rescuer, accompanied by the command, "Hold, sir; stand back!" induced him to desist. By this time the wrath of Symonds had abated sufficiently to allow of his giving further utterance to the remnant of his passion.

"And who the devil are you, sir?" he demanded, turning to the pacificator. "Who, I say, are you, sir, that presume to interfere between that dirty, filthy, low-born scoundrel and the punishment that is due to him?"

"What has he done?" demanded the other.

"By the great O'Toole, sir, what is that to you? First answer my question, sir, will you, if you have the slightest pretensions to be a gentleman? Who the devil are you?"—and Symonds, whose rage seemed fast boiling up to the striking-pitch, once more began to make a significant movement with his right hand, as if preparing to unsling his ratan and bring it into active engagement.

On seeing what kind of a character he had to deal with, the captain—for he it was who had rescued his mate—now, like a sensible person, anxious as far as possible to avoid further violence, drew himself up with considerable coldness, and deliberately replied—

"The excitement under which you are labouring is an apology for the style in which your question is put. I am the captain of this vessel, and ——"

"I want to hear no more, sir; put me on shore, I say, sir, this instant."

"Put you on shore, sir!—I don't understand you! Are you not a passenger going to England?"

"Passenger, be d—d, sir! No; I came off to see a friend start

with the vessel, and, while we were quietly talking together, here have you, without the slightest warning, either by bell or musket, given your ship a start, and are carrying me out to sea, whether I will or no."

"The fault is not mine, sir," coolly began the captain.

"But, by the Lord of Innisfail, then, I say, sir, it is; and, what's more, I say you shall repair it."

"I will do nothing of the sort," coolly answered the other. "You thought proper to come on board without my leave, and now, sir, there is the shore, and you may reach it in the same way that you came from it." And the captain, evidently irritated at the other's most intemperate language, and that which was still more galling, his contemptuous and violent demeanour, here made the "Terror of Fogies" a haughty bow, and then walked aft.

For some moments Major Symonds seemed rooted to the spot, in pure astonishment at the other's audacity, while he gazed fiercely, indeed wildly, at the retreating form of the captain, grinding his teeth with excessive rage, and eyeing him down from the crown of his blue cap to the heels of his shoes, just as some ruffled eagle who had received some ineffectual wound might concentrate the lightings of his eye on its intended prey, and poise himself on outstretched wings, marking the spot where he could most effectually strike with his talons to the very vitals of his foe.

Not greatly did he hesitate; with four or five rapid strides, that made the solid deck beneath him shake again, and with a stern, determined port, that induced all intervening spectators to get out of the road with the utmost rapidity, the brigadier came up with the worthy captain of the sea, just as the latter, at the end of his parade, had turned round by the compass binnacle, and now fronted him.

"What is that you dared to say, sir?" thundered Symonds, shaking the ratan in his right fist with a degree of nervous energy that plainly indicated how much his fingers longed to exercise its powers upon the back of the other.

"Very well, Thyce! No higher!" said the captain, looking over his left shoulder to the man at the wheel, and then directing his eye to the weather-leech of the fore-topsail—for the *Atlantic* was now under sail as well as steam,—but never deigning to notice the words or person of Symonds any more than if those had never been spoken, nor he had ever existed.

This mute scorn on the part of the naval commander seemed, if possible, to add to the ill-suppressed rancour of the field-officer.

"Will you answer me, I say, sir?" roared the latter, shaking the ratan in the captain's face. "I demand that you immediately stop your engines, heave-to the *Atlantic*, lower a boat, and send me instantly on shore."

"Dare but to touch my person with that cane, sir, and I will order my seamen to put you in irons for the rest of the voyage."

"D— your seamen, d— your irons, and d— yourself! Will.

you answer me this one question?—Do you intend, sir, to carry a gentleman a prisoner against his consent to sea?"

"A gentleman!" repeated the captain, accenting the word in a derisive tone. "Pray, sir, who are you?"

"Major Dennis Symonds, sir, much at your service;" and in an instant the Irishman's card was in his hand, and tendered to the captain.

The latter took it, and then added, "Oh, I see, you might as well have added, of 'the Spanish Legion.'"

"And what dare you, sir, or any other man say in derogation of the Spanish Legion? Speak out, sir, I am ready to hear it all; and trust me, sir, for whatever you choose to say, as well as for all you have said, I will bring you to a speedy and severe account."

"Whenever you please, sir," coolly replied the naval man; "though I have no doubt the balance will be found to go a little more against you than you now seem inclined to expect; and now, sir, having given you my final answer, till the time of that reckoning comes perhaps you will allow me to attend to my duty without any further interruption."

"Ease her, boy, ease her." This latter sentence was addressed to the man at the helm, for by this time the ship was getting fairly out from land, and, as there was a fresh breeze blowing, it brought a considerable sea, which rolled heavily in upon the lee shore.

"I ask you once more," vociferated Symonds, whose patience was evidently wearing to a rapid close, "will you or will you not heave-to your ship and let me land?"

By this time a number of the passengers had gathered round the disputants: one or two young military men returning from a tour in the United States, with their arms crossed, and their moustachioed lips lifted with considerable amusement at the scene passing before them, resolved that if the debate terminated in actual hostility, no such violence as that which the captain threatened should be executed upon their brother warrior, albeit his service had taken place in the Spanish Legion, and he himself was personally unknown to them.

There is not a regiment in the gallant army of old England, in which some jolly, glorious-hearted son of the Emerald Isle does not exist to support the amusement, and command the regard of his brother officers: and the moment Paddy opened his mouth, and proclaimed himself a field-officer, their sympathies were with him on both scores, namely, of his profession and nationality.

When, however, affairs had reached this desperate crisis, an elderly quaker, whose black locks were slightly tinged with grey, though time had not yet impaired his noble and most powerfully-knit figure, and who was going to visit some distant relatives in England's emporium of electioneering purity, the old city of Norwich, gently stepped forward, and, extending both his palms in an imploring manner, said—

"Friend, friend, I pray thee forbear, if only for a few minutes ! Thy own haste, I greatly fear me, mars the very object thou wouldst seek to gain. This worthy captain is a gentleman whom I know well and highly esteem ; entreat him but peaceably, and I engage my word he will not wrong thee, no, not to a hair's point. What is it, friend, thee wantest ?"

"By the Lord of Innisfail ! most peaceful wearer of broad brims and straight collars, have I been wasting my breath all this time to such little purpose, that you can't even understand what I want ? A gentleman without so much as a razor here to shave his chin, or even a change of linen to make his toilet, nor, by the great O'Toole, another coat to put on his back, if the one he has on should get either drenched or dirtied—I say, sir, is this the sort of man, or is this the kind of condition in which to carry a gentleman fairly against his will from America to England ?—merely because he happened to come on board to wish a friend good-bye, and the captain of the steamer thinks fit to set his paddle-wheels in motion, without even ringing a bell, or firing a musket, to warn his visitors that he is about to start ?"

"Well, friend, thee hast certainly stated a strong case, and I have no doubt, for all that is past and gone, it will meet with due attention. Now, friend captain, what dost thee say ?" turning to the other disputant : "dost thee not see that this is a very hard position in which to place a gentleman ; surely there is no passenger on board that will grudge a short delay to restore to the land one who has been taken from it with such marvellous little preparation for the exigencies of foreign travel."

"My good friend," said the captain, in answer to the appeal and taking the stretched-out hand of the quaker in one of his own, "if all folks were as reasonable as yourself, there would be little difficulty in getting through with any duty in the world ; but you see there are one or two points in this matter which that gentleman has not thought fit to state, but which I will for him. In the first place, that people should come off here to see their friends start is both kind and natural, and I am the last man in the world who will ever put the least impediment in their way either coming or going. But is it not also reasonable that all parties who do this should exercise sufficient prudence to prevent their becoming an impediment to the discharge of the ship's duties ?"

"Very good ; thou say'st that which no man can deny," admitted the kind-hearted mediator. "But," added he, "all men are liable to infirmity, and we should not be too ready to visit with great severity the mistakes and frailties of others. Thou knowest well, friend, we have all some day to be judged ourselves."

"That is true, my good sir, and I trust I may never forget it. But, you see, I don't happen to wear your peaceable cloth, but bear a commission in Her Majesty's navy, and must support my character as an officer and a gentleman, as well as discharge my other duties, one of which is never to allow the post I hold to be

treated with contempt. If this gentleman, on finding himself in the dilemma he has stated, had come to me civilly, and stated the difficulty in which he was placed, I am sure every passenger on board will tell him how ready I should have been to have assisted him by every means in my power. Instead of this, the first intimation I received that any one had been left behind was by seeing this officer knock down one of my mates, and trample on him. Can any duty of mine be compatible with suffering such conduct to be pursued with impunity?"

CHAPTER XXVI.

"Well, what's the matter?"

Pray, am I to blame?"

"Fool, stop your clatter."

"Don't call me that name."

I'll let you know——"

"First learn yourself, and then——"

"Zounds! what's your anger all about, good men?"

On hearing the statement concluding the last chapter, the old quaker lifted up his hands in some astonishment, and, pulling a face of inordinate length, turned to Symonds, saying, "Friend, I fear thou art a man of more violence than prudence; thou didst not make this an ingredient of thy case in stating it to me."

"No, Father Broadbrim," frankly and good-humouredly returned Symonds, "I said nothing about that, for it has nothing to do with the matter. I had told the mate to stop the engine; his only reply was to spit his dirty tobacco-juice at my face; and I, not seeing the joke, knocked him down; the whole affair was a mere matter of course, and the most natural thing in the world."

"Friend, thy mate certainly was in the wrong here," said Broadbrim, now turning to the captain.

"We have not heard the mate's account of it yet," was the reply of the latter. "Of the style and tone in which he was asked to stop the engine you are yourself a pretty good judge, since you have heard this officer make the same request to me; but I should as little think of obeying his commands as of squirting tobacco-juice at him."

"Nay, but, friend, you will make some allowances for the weakness of human nature. No man, suddenly finding himself about to be carried off to England against his will, and without even a change of raiment, would be likely to preserve the most equanimous frame of mind, more especially, perhaps, if that gentleman happened to be born in a land which poets have termed the Emerald Isle—not that I mean any offence to thee, friend," the quaker added, in a very deprecatory tone, to Major Symonds.

"Neither, honest Broadbrim, do I take any. But what makes you run your head against the Emerald Isle? I was never born there."

"What, friend, dost thee not call thyself an Irishman?"

"Thunder and turf, no! I was born in Scotland—it was my mother that was an Irishman!"

The roar of laughter that this produced scarcely allowed to be heard the concluding assertion of the major.

"It's true my father had a touch of the same complaint, and that's what always produces the mistake, gentlemen. I," continued the major gravely, as soon as he could once more gain a hearing, "have no doubt you see something very amusing in what I have said; and, though I perfectly agree with Horace, '*Difficile est propria communia dicere*,' yet, by my sowl, I don't see anything to laugh at in this matter!"

This assertion, as a matter of course, produced a shout still louder than that before.

"Well, gentlemen," said the major, "'tis to be hoped that you can each of you see your own wit, for, by this and by that, nobody else can."

"Friend, thou art the strangest Britisher that ever I came across. Thee hast the strongest brogue than can well be found in a Connaught man; yet nothing less will suit thee than being dubbed a Scot. Thou callest thy mother an Irishman, and then complainest that anybody should be amused at thy blunder. But these are trivial matters. Let me entreat thee, before the ship gets too far, to speak fair to our worthy friend here in the blue cap, and I am sure he will at once put thee on shore."

"If the gentleman had wished to be put on shore, he should have spoken before the pilot had left the ship; it's unfair to expect that captains of steam-vessels should be called upon on every idle occasion to delay their passage by heaving-to, and sending on shore every person who has been too careless to watch when the ship was got under way."

"How should I know when your pilot left the ship?" angrily replied Symonds, his former wrath all seeming to arise at the implied omission on his part.

"At any rate, it was more your business to watch than it was mine to come and inform you."

"This is what you call speaking him fair, Mr. Broadbrim?" said Symonds, holding out the palm of his hand, and turning to

the quaker with just such an inimitable look and expression as that most eloquent of all living orators, Charles Phillips, used occasionally to give to a jury before his great abilities met with their well-earned reward by promotion to the Bankruptcy Bench. "Pray, Mr. Broadbrim, did you ever try to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear?"

The admirable intonation in which this was uttered produced a second general roar.

"No, friend; my days have chiefly been passed in the growing of cotton. I have had little to do in the silk line, and I can safely affirm, on my veracity, I never essayed the delicate operation to which you allude."

"Oh! then indeed you are as much mistaken as any peaceful non-juror ever was in this desaitful world! You have tried your hand at it, man, this very morning, and a pretty kettle of fish you have made of it," pointing, at the same time, to the captain, and continuing to remark, "as the devil said when he—But I beg your pardon, Father Broadbrim; you and the devil are not on speaking terms just at present, I believe, so I won't vex your ear with any untimely allusions to an old acquaintance, at least as creditable as your friend here in the blue cap, to whom I'll only put one question more, and by his answer to that I'll know how to deal to him."

Then turning to the captain, the major said, "Once more, sir, I make a formal demand on you to heave-to your steam-ship, and set me on shore. Yes or no; will you do it, sir, or not?"

The captain was just going to make some angry reply to this requisition, when a gentleman stepped forward from among the circle of passengers, and beckoned to the captain.

From the deference the latter paid, it was evident that this new mediator was a party of considerable rank and importance.

Drawing the commander out of ear-shot, the gentleman laid his hand upon his arm and said,—

"Pray, my dear captain, if it is at all possible, do set this Irish major on shore."

"Am I to submit to be bullied in this way in my own ship?"

"Why, no, I admit it is highly improper, and his style of asking the favour does anything but entitle him to your consideration. Still, you know how much a hot-headed Irishman says that he never means; and after all, to carry him off to England, against his will, may be a matter extremely misconstrued by the public, whom, do what you will to enlighten, you never can persuade to be unanimous in taking a right view of any question; and, even at the last, when you consider how many ladies there are on board, and how distressing it will be to the whole of us to have this major and you perpetually at daggers drawn until we reach England, and then, perhaps, one half of us subpoenaed, against our will, to come and give evidence against you on some civil action for false imprisonment——"

"Oh, as to his action, let him bring it if he dares. I fear nothing either from his action or himself."

"I know you don't fear anything; and that is exactly the very thing I lament. It will infallibly spoil all the amusement of our voyage to have any one in the cabin perpetually seeking an opportunity of renewing his quarrel with you, and perhaps finding among the younger passengers some persons inexperienced or ill-advised enough to form a party with him. Let me beg of you, as a favour to myself, and as a favour to all the occupants of the saloon, to give him a boat, to send him ashore, and so have done with him at once."

"Why, really," said the captain, "it would take so long, we should have to heave-to at least a couple of hours before a boat could land him and return; and you must remember we are off a lee shore, and if it should come on to blow hard to-night, we may be placed in a very awkward position through this intemperate fool."

"Oh! the weather seems as firm as rock, even if we had only our sails; but with steam, it can but make a couple of hours difference in our voyage."

"Yes; but think what that is, timed as we are, wasting fuel and everything else!"

"Well, that is very true; but after all, the whole affair is a choice of difficulties, and surely this is choosing the least."

"Well, as a matter of kindness and attention to the passengers, I'll consent to do it; and though the fellow doesn't deserve it, I'll heave-to, hoist out a boat, send him ashore, fire a gun, and make a signal for a boat to come and meet him, and so, perhaps, we may save an hour's time. But remember, I feel it my duty to the company I serve, and the officers I command, to make the whole of this conditional upon this Major Symonds previously making me a full apology."

"Oh, certainly, certainly; that is but right and proper, and I'll get it from him."

The captain here walked to the fore part of the quarter-deck, while the gentleman who had been conferring with him returned to the group of passengers that had collected round the major, and bowing very courteously to the latter, with a winning kindness of manner that already went a great way towards gaining his object, he said,—

"Major Symonds, some of the passengers having requested me to speak to the commander of the *Atlantic* on the subject of the unpleasant accident to which we owe the pleasure of your acquaintance, I have done so with great readiness, and that gentleman permits me to say that, on your giving to me an explanation and retraction of those hasty expressions which your not at all unnatural annoyance no doubt occasioned, that he shall be most happy to render you such assistance as lies in his power, by heaving-to, hoisting out a boat to convey you towards the shore,

and firing a gun and making a signal for some other boat to meet you half-way. This, I trust, will quite meet your wishes, and terminate the little unpleasantness that has arisen."

Major Symonds looked at the other with a keen, searching glance for a few seconds, and then replied,—

"Sir, though I have not the pleasure of knowing you, I perceive you are a fine, gentlemanly fellow, who have done your best to help a couple of lame dogs over the stile, and you have my warmest thanks accordingly. But when the proposal you have just done me the honour to make is stripped from the refined and courtier-like language in which you have clothed it, it amounts simply to this: If you'll make an apology to this captain, he'll set you on shore. Now, by every drop of blood in my veins, sir, meaning no offence to you, to whom we are all much indebted—as to making an apology, the O'Tooles never knew the language of apology, and I am much too old a soldier now to begin and learn it. It's I who ought to have the apology made to me, for I conceive myself to have been extremely ill used in the matter; but still, if the captain should be foolish enough to entertain a similar notion on his part, it is but natural to conceive that he would, like myself, require satisfaction for it; and, by the honour of an English gentleman, there is no sort of pleasure in the wide world that would give me half so much delight, either at as few paces or as many, as early or as late, as that selfsame captain chooses. But as to a word of apology! by the lord of Innisfail, he may either send me on shore, or pitch me overboard, or carry me round the universal globe, or do whatever else he pleases; but the devil a word of apology will he ever get from me, Dennis Symonds!"

CHAPTER XXVII.

“And so I interfered, and with the best
Intentions ; but their treatment was not kind.
I think the foolish people were possess’d.”

BYRON.

VEXED as the second mediator felt, he could not help being amused at the energy and determination of the major, nor admiring the keenness with which he saw through the effort made to get to windward of him, and the courage with which he baffled it.

“Well, Major Symonds, I will certainly give your reply to the captain, but I am afraid it precludes all hope of accommodating this disagreeable matter ; for really, to say the least of it, the strong language you have used almost forbids the captain to comply with your request, unless upon the terms I have mentioned.”

“Then, sir, saving your presence, the devil a compliance we’ll ever get from him, and that’s all that’s about it.”

“For both your sakes, I much regret it ;” and, bowing to the major, the stranger walked forward to the captain, while the redoubtable Dennis stood tapping his instep with his ratan, and nodding his head backwards, as if confirming himself in his obstinate resolution, repeating several times aloud :—

“Apology ! apology, faith ! Whatever the worthy captain may have to say against the Spanish Legion, *they* were not the boys for growing apologies very plentiful without a shot or two beforehand, just to season the dish.” Then, turning to the quaker, he continued, “Why, even you, Father Broadbrim, wouldn’t like to have Daniel Lambert treading on your toe, and swearing he wouldn’t take his foot off till you made him an apology.”

“Why, friend,” answered the quaker smilingly, “the word certainly sticketh somewhat ungratefully in the throat, verily it doth, but I would rather compound with Daniel Lambert, if that Goliath among the Philistines still lived, for treading on my toe, than be carried off on a voyage to England against my will, merely because my tongue had been rash enough to utter a few hasty words, neither very courteous nor very kind in their way, perchance, and my reason, when reminded of the indiscretion, was too self-willed to retract them.”

“Broadbrim, Broadbrim, thee understandest not the matter. Soldiers have a strait-lacing of their consciences, as strict in its kind as any that guides thy sect.”

"Oh, friend, if it be a matter of conscience, I will reproach thee not, though thou shouldst go to Jericho."

At this acknowledgment of the quaker there was a hearty laugh, in which the Irishman joined; and at this juncture the second foiled ambassador came back to express his regret that his attempted mediation had failed.

"I am sorry, therefore," continued he, "Major Symonds, that I am obliged to resign this awkward affair into the hands of yourself and the captain."

"With all my heart. I will soon dispose of what remains of my share of it. Now, gentlemen," added the brigadier, turning to the group around him, "you have heard the whole of the case, and while there was any chance of your arranging the matter, I was willing to let any one that would take a hand in it. But as that is now hopeless, and as it seems I am to be torn from my friends and residence, whether I will or nay, all that remains for me is to protest against this outrage, and to punish it when I arrive in England. I must now, therefore, request you to hear me make a formal demand once more to be sent on shore! if that is not complied with, I shall know what to do."

Major Symonds then looked round for the commander, and seeing him at the break of the quarter-deck, strode on towards him. Several of the young male passengers followed his steps. He soon arrived opposite to where the captain stood, evidently prepared to receive him.

"Sir," said the major, in the same imperative commanding tone he had used throughout the transaction, "in the presence of these assembled gentlemen, who hear me, I have now to make a final demand, that you will instantly heave-to the ship and send me on shore: I am not a passenger; I am detained here against my will; you are carrying me to England in utter outrage of all my relations and engagements in America, and I now formally demand to be set free!"

"Major Symonds," said the captain, in a tone which, though perfectly gentlemanlike, was still as firm and unyielding as that of the other, "I have no wish to carry you anywhere. I know nothing about you, and care less; that which you call an outrage is a mischance entirely of your own creating. You might have quitted my ship in the harbour of New York with as much ease as did all my other visitors. Why you neglected to do so, you best know; you have given us an account of it, certainly; but, to say the least, it appears to me most singular that you should not have heard the paddle-wheels first start into motion; however, be that as it may, I am willing to overlook everything in the way of annoyance and delay, except the language and conduct by which you have thought fit to outrage the discipline of my ship, and I am still willing to go out of my way, and give you a boat to put you on shore, if you choose for your conduct to make a suitable apology."

"Then, sir, neither to you nor to any man breathing will I do anything of the sort," answered the major, now rapidly heating up to white combustion point once more. "Apology! whew! It's a language that never was used by me yet, and I'm not going to begin. If you have, therefore, any personal complaint against myself, you know how to deal with that. As much satisfaction as ever you please you shall have, but no apology from me. I therefore ask you, sir, once more, ay or no, will you put me on shore?"

"On the terms I have stated, sir, I will; but I should be failing in my duty if I did so on any other."

"Then, sir, they are no terms at all," said the major, tossing his head on one side; "and I call all these gentlemen here to witness that you are carrying me off a prisoner from my own home."

"With this the peppery field-officer turned hastily round towards the stern, and addressed the passengers assembled round him, saying, "Now, gentlemen, since I suppose I must be a ship-mate of yours, whether I will or nay, who is the man among you that will give me the honour of his company to a devilled biscuit and a bottle of champagne, by way of tiffin? This talking work, after all, is but a dry matter."

Then, as no one seemed inclined to make an offer for his society, he looked to the two men in mustachios, saying, "Gentlemen, will you do me the honour to take a glass of wine to a better acquaintance?"

"With all my heart," said the elder of the two, who possessed a fine, frank, sunburnt countenance, and a merry laughing eye; and then, turning to his younger friend, he said, "And you, my boy, will do the same, won't you?"

"With pleasure," said the latter; and instantly diving below towards the saloon, the Spanish Legion man and his brothers in arms were speedily as deep in the contents of a pigeon pie as if the latter had known the former for years; and the former had been only about to cross from Southend to the Nore, instead of being carried against his will from the new world to the old.

There are certainly several bad habits which even the best of men contract in either of the two services, navy or army—such as an intense love of rambling, a disposition for perpetual change, a tendency to a life of pleasure and idleness, and a great taste for adventure, together with certain other anti-domestic propensities, which develop themselves more or less strongly according to the disposition of the individual. Still, there are some great and striking advantages which life in the army or navy almost invariably confers, namely, a thorough contempt of danger or difficulty, a firm self-reliance on the powers of the individual, and a sort of happy indifference what trick Fate may play you, with a perfect conviction that, let Fortune deal you what cards she may, you will be sure, some way or other, to make a hand out of them. In short, to use a very homely simile, that, "let the cat be thrown from what garret she will, she'll be sure to alight on her feet at last."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

“A plague on all cowards, say I!
Call you this backing your friends?”

SHAKESPEARE.

WHILE affairs were thus proceeding in the saloon below, almost all the passengers who remained on deck very properly gathered round the captain, and expressed their conviction that he had done everything that could possibly be expected from him under the circumstances for the accommodation of the hot-tempered gentleman who had got into such a dilemma, and for that due support of order and discipline in the ship which required that the captain should be a person whose conduct should prove him not to be in any way open to be deterred by intemperate and insulting language or conduct; though perfectly accessible to reason, and courteous in his bearing to those parties of the public who, by using his ship and supporting the company that ran it, became thereby, in a more remote degree, the persons who conferred upon him and sustained him in his command and office.

The captain, who was a gentleman much respected, expressed the pleasure it gave him to know that his conduct had not been misled into harshness by the very irritating demeanour of the major; and, supported by the view the passengers in general took of the question, said, “I have no doubt that the company at home will bear me out in the line of action I have pursued.”

Thus, both parties being perfectly convinced that not the shadow of a fault lay with either of them—and certainly, as far as the captain was concerned, this was a right view of the case, although a great deal might be urged in extenuation of the major's violence,—we will now leave these high belligerents to dispose of their mutual feelings as they best might, and repair once more to the engine-room, where still remained the unwitting cause of all the affray.

Herbert, as we have already said, had no sooner set eyes once more on Nautila than, in his excessive joy, he knew not how to look at any other object, and thus never once perceived that his friend, the major, guessed no more of what he had last told him—in short, that he was no more aware of the advent of old Snooks than if such a euphonious name had never been mentioned in his hearing. Herbert contrived to gain the engine-room without being noticed, either by Nautila or her father; and during his stay here, it certainly excited his surprise to find that the engine

was not speedily stopped to allow the Terror of Fogies to gain the shore. Thinking, however, that this was delayed until the pilot should be going, we must confess, and we hope, that he will be pardoned for the crime, that the lover was far more engrossed with the exciting thoughts occasioned by his mistress's sudden appearance than by any very deep consultation as to how his friend was to regain the shore.

It did strike him at one period that he thought he heard something like an altercation of voices on deck; but naval voices are so accustomed to contentious disputations, in which the argument is all on one side, and the issue mostly like that of a suit gained in equity, by dint of hard swearing, that it scarcely attracted his attention.

Half an hour passed away—an hour—at length two—and the engine, so far from being stopped, continued to ply with its utmost velocity.

"How very long you require to keep your pilot on board!" said Herbert to one of the begrimed attendants.

"Pilot! Lord love you, sir, the pilot has been gone ashore more than two hours ago."

"What!" said Herbert; "surely you mistake."

"What should I make a mistake for? Wasn't I standing by the side? Didn't I see him go myself? He didn't stay on board much after the agent; he was gone before you came down here."

"Then, what the deuce can have become of the major?" said Herbert to himself.

For a moment, it must be confessed, a pang of something not very much unlike jealousy shot across our hero's bosom.

"Surely, he can never be staying on board with a notion of making up to Nautila himself, though she is so beautiful I could scarcely find it in my heart to blame him if he were: but no! reckless as he is on many points of character, I must say I think him the last person who would be guilty of a breach of good faith to a comrade. I wish I could get up to see what has become of him. Surely, those words I heard could not proceed from his demanding to be sent on shore! though, even if they did, I dare not leave this till nearly nightfall. If the old man should once know that I am here, no human exertion would be spared to take his daughter beyond communication with myself; I must, therefore, leave the Terror of Old Fogies to his fate a few hours longer."

As, however, it would have excited suspicion had Herbert remained in the engine-room till night fell; and, as there was equal danger in going out upon the fore-castle, lest he should meet with Mr. St. John, just where one meets every person, namely, where they are least expected, he held a long consultation with himself as to the course to be pursued.

The last method of proceeding, after all, appeared to be the wisest; and some three hours after the vessel started, Herbert,

full of apprehension and alarm, came forth from his abiding-place.

The old man had so often surprised our hero by his various experiences, that, albeit the latter thought it highly improbable he should have been much at sea, still he dared not count on Mr. St. John's sickness, though it was highly probable, as was indeed the fact, that at this moment his intended father-in-law was suffering under severe nausea in his own cabin.

Herbert, getting as far forward in the bows of the vessel as he well could, watched, with intense eagerness, the gradual departure of the weary hours, knowing that, in all probability, the secluded habits of the father would lead him to retire early to his cabin, and that then he should be able to get down into the saloon without much danger, and reconnoitre the general proceedings of the enemy.

While anxiously engaged in watching the slow but continued sinking of the land beneath their lee, some one tapped him on the shoulder. In the direst alarm he turned about, and there, to his great relief, stood the major.

"A charming position, upon my soul it is, sir, to have the honour of acting as a friend of yours!" said the latter, with a very angry look.

"Why, my dear fellow, how, in the name of fortune, do you come to be on board at this time! Where, in the name of fortune are you going?"

"Only to England," said the major.

"For what purpose?" demanded Herbert.

"You may well ask that," said the Irishman, "for, as far as I can make out, the only reason for my taking a trip in such an unprepared manner is, the folly, though I am ready to confess it was certainly very great indeed, of undertaking to do you a service; and nicely you stuck to me in my difficulties!"

"Stick to you, my dear fellow! how could I? Didn't I tell you that Mr. St. John and his daughter came on board just as we were aware that the steamer had started: you know I was obliged to run below out of their sight, or the old fellow himself would have left the ship, and we should neither of us have had anything but our trouble for our pains."

"Old St. John on board!" repeated the major, upon whom this seemed to break as an entirely new light. "Old St. John on board!"

"Yes; old St. John."

"What! regular old Snooks?"

"Yes; old Snooks."

"And his daughter?"

"Yes; his daughter."

"The young Snooks? the fair Snooks, I should say?"

"Nay, major; I have no objection to enjoy a laugh at the old boy as long as you please, but spare the daughter, for my sake."

"Give me your hand, my boy; I beg your pardon. Certainly, it did appear to me rather strange at first that you should run off, and leave your friend in a scrape; but now I see the delicacy of your situation. Oh, 'pon my sowl, the case is altered entirely! By the Lord of Innisfail, I'm not at all sorry, as the thing has turned out, that yon stupid dog of a captain wouldn't set me ashore after all. I see we shall have some fun on board. I smell out an adventure, too, for myself. By my honour, there is a remarkably pretty widow down in the saloon yonder as ever you'd wish to see; to say nothing of a mighty sweet little sucking-dove, besides; one's quite puzzled to choose between them."

"What, then, and was that actually you that I heard making such a row with the captain after I left the deck?"

"To be sure! to be sure! It wasn't likely, was it, that I would permit a mere fellow, because he happened to hold a commission in the king's navy, to detain me on board here, like a prisoner of war, without expressing a few of my notions to him on that subject, a little urgently it might be, for his benefit. I shall want your assistance in a little account I have to settle with him at landing; but, as that can't happen for some days, it will be time enough to talk of it when we make the Lizard."

"But, major, I am really sorry that you should be thus carried off at such a serious inconvenience on my account."

"Oh, tut! don't think of it. If I had only a few shirts on board, and one or other little comforts of that sort——"

"Nay, never trouble yourself about that; there is no such very great difference in our figures. I have plenty and to spare in my kit, and you must, of course, command the whole of it entirely."

"Then I'm right glad to hear it; that was the only point on which I had any misgiving; and, as to the rest, it is a mere matter of lark."

"Well, if you are not distressed at it, I assure you I am exceedingly rejoiced to have you with me. It will prove of the most material advancement to my plans: thus, you see, I hardly dare go into the saloon for fear of running against the old boy; but, as he does not know your person, you go down, will you, and find out what he is about. If he is alive and kicking, I won't go down. But if, as I think is very likely, he is hard up on his beam-ends with sea-sickness, in such case I may venture below, and change my toilette, of which, to tell you the truth, I shall be exceedingly glad."

"To be sure—to be sure, I will," said the major. "Just give me a description of the old boy minutely, will you?"

This was done by Herbert to the letter, and away the major went on his commission. In a few minutes he returned with the intelligence that Mr. Snooks was very sick in his cabin, and went by the name of Mr. Charles. Both he and his daughter and

old housekeeper were most safely disposed of for the rest of the day, being, indeed, so ill as to be obliged to take to their cots.

For once, Herbert was almost improper enough to rejoice in a neighbour's misfortunes; and though it would have delighted him if *Nautila* had been excepted from the general calamity, he certainly would not have let off either of the old people upon any condition but that of remaining fast in their couches.

Under these auspicious circumstances, he no longer hesitated to go aft to the saloon and seek out the steward, who had held out to him some expectation of arranging about a cabin.

Though this functionary was somewhat surprised to find our hero, whom, from his mode of dealing with money, he concluded to be a magnifico of the first water, now simply attired in a sailor's habit, he was still able to inform him that he had discovered a young gentleman willing to arrange with Herbert the cession of a cabin.

This youth, so wise in his generation, was going from a house at New Orleans, on some special business, to a firm at Glasgow, and his passage having been taken by his employers in the steamer, for the sake of expedition, he was extremely glad to pocket the amount of fare for the passage, which would be a very agreeable addition to the sum of pocket-money to which he would otherwise have been limited for his own pleasures.

This affair having been duly settled, Herbert was forthwith installed in a very comfortable berth, that is, as far as anything can be comfortable that is connected with the sea; and this decided, he quickly changed his dress into one more suitable for an after-cabin passenger; and having given to the major an ample stock of such articles of apparel as he required, and procured a spare hammock to be slung in his cabin, they entered the general saloon in time to partake of the hospitable fare that was set before them.

CHAPTER XXIX.

“ Britannia needs no bulwarks,
No towers along the steep :
Her march is o’er the mountain waves,
Her home is on the deep ;
With thunders from her native oak,
She quells the floods below,
As they roar on the shore,
Where the stormy winds do blow.”

CAMPBELL.

Up to this period, we have been so busy attending to the necessary claims of our *dramatis personæ*, that we have really had little or no time to say one word in description of the splendid vessel in which they were placed.

It is well known to the world, that when there occurred that noble stride in navigation which enabled us to extend our steam voyages to America, that several highly deserving and enterprising individuals resolved to construct steamers purposely fitted to facilitate this new branch of national transport and commerce. Expressly with this view had been built the vessel in question, and certainly she was a noble specimen of what art can accomplish when a high premium is offered for its success.

Several steamers of very great magnitude had, previous to this period, been built in England, where, not only in this but in every department of naval architecture, there had rapidly crept in a spirit, extending very greatly beyond the usual limits that had long formed the boundary, in point of size, for ships of the largest class.

And here it may be remarked, in passing, as a singular circumstance, that this inclination to enlarge to the utmost practicable extent the size of our vessels was very slow of obtaining ground in a nation so long and still pre-eminent for all the arts connected with that source of our greatness and glory, the Ocean.

Long after other nations had produced their architectural sea-monsters, Great Britain continued quietly to content herself with those moderate-sized vessels which had still been large and powerful enough to gain her the envied title of “ Mistress of the Seas.”

In the English nation, when a three-decker reached, in admeasurement, the size of two thousand tons, she was, up to a late period, regarded in the British navy as a vessel of superb dimen-

sions ; and the *Victory*, so hallowed in the memory of us all, by having borne the flag of England's greatest hero, only measured to about this extent.

The first state that set the the example of any great increase of size was that of Spain, which produced the *Santisima Trinidad*, an enormous specimen of a man-of-war, and carrying—which no vessel has before or since ever attempted—four separate tiers of guns on four complete decks.

Whether, however, from little or no advantage having resulted from the adoption of this unusual vastness to the nation essaying it, or from a practical experience of its inconvenience, we know not, but no imitation, either in our own navy or that of France, followed this example set by Spain.

When, however, the American war took place, the wise republicans, who chose neither the officers of their navy nor the chiefs of their admiralty for the somewhat inconsistent qualifications of high birth, or large landed estates, but from the old-fashioned notion that the men they appointed to these posts had the most valour and the most brains to discharge their duties, strange as it may appear, the latter qualification suggested to our Yankee brothers the great benefit that would result to themselves if they could rapidly put upon the seas a species of vessel equal in vigour, weight of metal, and power, to the smaller class of English seventy-fours, infinitely swifter than these in their powers of chase or escape by their quick sailing, and sufficiently large, moreover, to carry a gun till then unused, except in line-of-battle ships, from its great weight, namely, the long thirty-two pounder, and which could therefore throw its large shot, and be perfectly effective at a distance that a lighter ball would not even reach.

By putting such a craft as this upon the water, built in the style and bearing the title of a frigate, the astute Americans, with their usual keenness, at once perceived that they should oblige the English men-of-war of the same title, however inferior in size and power, to meet them in single combat ; a style of engagement that would be about as fair and as equal as if an English frigate should attempt to engage in smooth water a French seventy-four.

This scheme, so ably planned, most perfectly succeeded. Inspired by going into battle with a superior strength, that rendered victory as certain as if one man with a coat of mail should fight another with a Guernsey frock, the American frigates had nothing to do but by their superior sailing to keep at a long distance, out of reach of the comparatively small balls of the English, and return for these, with deadly effect, the heavy thirty-two pounders, which the greater size of the republican ships enabled them with ease to carry.

In this manner several of our frigates were taken during the first American war, and no bravery short of that wanton sacrifice of our seamen's lives, going down with colours flying, could have prevented it.

With the world at large our opponents had all the credit that appeared on paper, from one frigate taking another in single action.

Common sense would suggest that, when this trick had been played us once or twice, the English would instantly have put on the shelf all the small frigates that had now become useless, except to sacrifice the national glory, and the lives of her devoted men, and that with the utmost expedition the dockyards would have been employed by day and night in sending to sea a large squadron of heavy frigates, fitted in every way to cope with those that the republicans had been wise enough to send against us.

Monstrous and incredible as it may appear, this was never done. We continued to lose ship after ship, to the utter disheartenment of our own service, and the great glorification of our enemies; and the incapable idiots who enjoyed the job of the Admiralty (for in England everything is made a job), actually disgraced the English name upon the seas so far, as to give out orders that, if captains of the usually-sized English frigates encountered the large American frigates, they were to forbear from bringing the latter to action.

This error of the English continued, then, during a great part of the American war. It was only when utterly too late to be of any utility, that the British consented to build ships which would give to the officers and men appointed to them an opportunity of meeting the enemy on equal terms, such as the *Java*, the *Southampton*, and others of this class: but by the time that these were launched from the builder's yard, all the mischief had been done; the Americans had acquired the title of having disputed with us our sovereignty of the seas, attained the whip-hand of us in more ways than one, and gained all they sought in an advantageous peace.

Here from this point there perhaps may be fairly dated the great increase in the size of vessels. When the corrupt influence of the Melville tribe ceased at the Admiralty, other claims besides those of his relations began to get a hearing; and at last, though it may seem difficult to believe the fact in England, parties were actually found bold enough to consider what would be best for the good of the country. An able and enterprising officer of the name of Symonds at last became surveyor-general of the navy, and at once introduced an immense improvement in the size, power, and equipments of English men-of-war.

Having conferred a benefit on the State by so doing, this, I presume, has been found quite sufficient to disqualify him from any longer holding his office; and, though not knowing him, I cannot speak positively on the subject, I believe he has long since been removed from his post. Perhaps, poor man, he did not own any tenants in a potwolloping borough, or was not skilled in the art of giving away blankets to the poor, for the purpose of securing votes at the next election, or his cousin in the town council of

Buyemall had suddenly gone dead, or some other equally undoubted disqualification had happened to him.

But, no matter, he is no longer surveyor of the navy; the improvement, however, he introduced in building government vessels was adopted by private individuals, and the *Atlantic*, amongst several others of the same class, was built to run between England and America. Some difference existed as to the various sizes of these, and of all the number so employed, the *Atlantic*, we believe, was the largest.

It had often been objected to her, indeed, that her extreme length was too great for her beam, inasmuch as it left her open to the danger of becoming either hogged or broken-backed, and certainly in a steam-vessel this liability became greater than in any other description of ship, from the fact of so great a weight being necessarily placed amidships, where the engines are situated.

But the *Atlantic* had already run several voyages across the sea, from which she had been named. These she had made in safety, and, notwithstanding all croakers, parties most interested in her welfare had little doubt of her continuing for many years to make the long voyage in safety.

No decoration, no convenience that money could secure or art suggest, had been omitted in her fitting-up or construction, and she certainly swam upon the seas a noble and apparently a perfect specimen of what both could accomplish.

Her engines were of immense power, and took her through the water at considerable speed. She was calculated to make the voyage from England to New York, or *vice versâ*, in the short space of from twelve to fourteen days, and had already accomplished the mean of the two periods.

Every heart beat high with hope on board her, and all calculated—as indeed why might they not?—on her now performing with equal speed and certainty the same passage whose dangers and difficulties she had already surmounted before.

The difficulty which our hero had experienced in getting a cabin may convince us of the high estimation in which every one valued his chance of sailing in the ship, and proved the anxiety they all felt to remain in her till her voyage was accomplished. Alas! could they only have known what was to be her fate; could some index-hand have pointed out to them the sad story of the next ten days, what a different scene should we not have witnessed!

Instead of paying a double fare to go in her, should we not rather have beheld the affrighted passengers and crew emulating each other in their haste to fly from the danger?—all imploring with one voice to be returned safely to the shore, all striving with precipitation and alarm to hoist out their boats, and desert, before it was too late, that splendid vessel, fretted and adorned as she was with gold and colours and curious device, and leaving behind to the mercy of the winds and waves the thousand and one luxuries and refinements which she bore upon the bosom of the deep.

But man fortunately is blind to the fate that pursues him ; and of what was to follow no one dreamed, or slow, indeed, would have been the gallant major to rush madly as he had done upon the dangers round him, even for the sake of the adventures his expedition certainly promised.

Thus much, then, for a description of the vessel. In our next chapter we shall attempt to sketch out some of the most prominent of those characters who had, unhappily, cast their lot on board this vessel of the doomed.

CHAPTER XXX.

“ And thus, as he called them by title and name,
They entered, and dinner was served as they came.”

GOLDSMITH.

THE rattle of knives and forks and laying of spoons rang loudly in the principal saloon, when Herbert, as we have already shown, took possession of his cabin.

Small though his berth was, he found it very convenient, fitted up with much attention to comfort, and appearing in his eyes the more desirable from the contrast which it afforded to the dark and dismal hole in which he had spent the last few hours. Himself and the gallant brigadier having both made to their toilet the requisite additions for approaching dinner, and the advent of the soup being close at hand, they went into the saloon to take their places.

Herbert's heart, it may easily be supposed, beat with oppressive rapidity as he entered that crowded room, even though he knew that his friends were too greatly indisposed to make their appearance. Still, as with infinite quickness, his practised eye wandered round the cabin, he almost expected to behold those dearly-beloved features on which it was such exquisite joy to gaze once more.

Dinner was placed on table, and all hands able to appear were seated. The vacant chairs were removed, the destructive process proceeded, but no Mr. St. John, no Nautila, no Mrs. Cerberus. It was quite clear that the party were not well enough to avail themselves of the dinner-table ; or, that the old man, with those exclusive notions which were peculiar to him, had determined to retain the privacy of his own cabin.

In either case, Herbert felt that he was now at liberty, at any rate, to dine in peace, without fear of wars, or rumours of wars, or other interruptions; and, sufficiently exhausted by the events of the last forty-eight hours, we must admit that the lover, hero as he was, committed a most unheroical onslaught on soup, fish, flesh, and game.

In this temporary departure from the high post it was his to fill, he was, we also confess it, scandalously aided, abetted, and encouraged, by one or two parties close at hand, *imprimis*, of course, the brigadier, and next to him the worthy quaker whom Symonds had so unceremoniously dubbed "Neighbour Broadbrim," and who sat opposite to him.

The captain presided not many seats off, most ably supported by a gentleman who appeared on his left. This was no other than Wynne Powell, a man who—but, bless me, you must all know Wynne Powell perfectly well—must have danced with him at the balls at Bath, flirted with him at the parties at Cheltenham, hunted with him over some of the best ground in Leicestershire, or shot with him at the *battues* of my Lord B—.

There he sat, the jolly little dog, looking exactly like what he was—one of the best-hearted fellows in the universe, as agreeable a companion as an idle hour can require, and one of the merriest Welsh rectors that ever called himself a younger son. Never did mortal man seem better made for activity or enjoyment. In height he was about five feet four inches and a half, muscular, but not fleshy, with a handsome little sporting face, sharp nose, bright sparkling eyes, dark, curling hair, and the rosiest cheeks that ever swelled out to the cry of "Hark, forward!"

Having travelled everywhere, done everything, seen everybody, and found out that last great secret, that everything amounts to nothing, he and Herbert and the brigadier had all hobnobbed, in the more distant fashion of wine-taking, before the fish well nigh swam from the table in the arms of the steward. Each took the *métier* of the other in a few seconds, and all felt certain of belonging to the same brotherhood.

Next to the Welsh parson, as we will take leave to call him, came Lady Smuggins, the early part of whose career had commenced as bride to the steward of a Scotch smack; from thence her lord and master had, by strict regard of his "ain sma' peculiar" aspired to the independence of keeping a pork and butcher's shop, until, rising by slow degrees, or what he termed "the blessing o' Providence," though we may somewhat doubt whether this was the right term to give it, he was at last wise enough to cheat his country most effectually, by means of a government contract and the profession of tory principles.

The reputation of being a successful rogue at once paved the way for him, of course, to sundry considerations, which were finally crowned with the honour of a citizen's knighthood.

Forgetting the ladder by which they had risen, and knowing

brother Jonathan's weakness of worshipping titles while he affects to deride them, Sir John and Lady Smuggins went to travel in America, and, finding nothing at all good enough for them, were now on their way back, exceedingly disgusted. Her ladyship, being accustomed to the sea of old, was able to face the dinner-table undeterred by the heavy rolling of the steamer, which permitted few of the fair sex such command of their digestive powers.

Opposite to the brigadier, it is true, there sat a very pretty little girl, flourishing like a lily of the valley in the shadow of a huge mountain of humanity, who called himself worth a plum, every figment of which had been gathered by the making of candlesticks at Birmingham.

From these retainers of light, he seemed to have taken all the brass, but none of the illumination; he appeared intensely wrapped up in the immenseness of his own sublimity, always called his daughter "child," as if he tried hard to persuade himself that he was not much past sixty-eight, bullying the steward perpetually as to the quality of the sherry, and casting every now and then, when he thought himself unobserved, most ferocious looks at the brigadier, who, from the first moment of his sitting down at the table, had commenced ogling, talking to, and talking at "the child," in a manner as unmistakable and unabashed as all the rest of his off-hand conduct.

Just below the candlestick-maker sat the men of the moustache, fine, handsome, soldierly-looking fellows, with just a shade or two too much hauteur and reserve about them to pass either for men perfect in their manner, or parties who had seen enough of the world to free them from all prejudice, by bringing them in contact with every grade of society.

Besides these few, there was a sample of almost every animal under the sun likely to pay the amount of passage-money; an innumerable host, to attempt to describe whom would seem to be stealing a thought from Homer and his catalogue of ships, while in reality, it would be departing sadly from the rules of the great epic poet, as very few beyond those we have named, nor even all those, occupied a prominent share in the subsequent catastrophe we are about to describe.

For all the intermediate characters that filled up the picture—and they were many—for all the blacks, browns, greys, and neutral tints, in short, of the table, we give a *carte blanche* to the imagination of the reader. We have only attempted to delineate one or two of the leading figures in bright scarlet, blue, and yellow; the primitive colours and the others matter not to our design. Of one old fellow, however, it is necessary, at parting, we should just jot down a dot or two.

At the corner of the table nearest the companion-hatchway, toward which he every now and then directed an uneasy glance, as if some inward feeling warned him of the impending necessity

of speedy flight, sat a very tall, thin, lean man, with a wondrously hooked nose, and strange, cadaverous, excited countenance. He sat on the very edge of his chair, which appeared as though it were every moment about to slide from beneath him, his body craned out at a most awful angle, and himself employed bolting his food in a style perfectly ravenous, speaking to no one, attending to no one, and apparently thinking of no one but himself.

Suddenly he ceased his labours, dropped his knife and fork, placed both his hands a little below his waist, with a piteous and mournful uncertainty of visage, exclaiming, in a melancholy voice, "I guess this won't stay down, that's what I do; this will come up, I reckon, that's what it will! Help!—steward, waiter, whatever your name is, a glass of brandy!"

"What name, sir?" said the obsequious steward.

"Ebenezer Wire," groaned the long man.

"Ebenezer Wire!" repeated the brigadier, at the other end of the saloon. "By this and by that, no man ought to have either help or assistance who can go into public company and proclaim himself aloud by the title of Ebenezer Wire!"

CHAPTER XXXI.

"What hellish plots
Dost thou devise against our lives?"

Troilus and Cressida.

THE repast having ended, wine and dessert were put upon the table, when Herbert, who longed to have a little reflection as to what would be the result of his meeting with Nautila, at once resigned the honours of the bottle to the brigadier, an officer nowise loth to be left representative in such a cause; and, this arranged, our friend stole off quietly to the upper-deck, seated himself on the paddle-box, and, producing his light, proceeded to enjoy a very exquisite cigar.

We trust that for this piece of self-indulgence our lady-friends will pardon him. It is very true the odour is not of the style or description always likely to prove pleasant to them, especially in the past sense; but, if they were aware how much their cause sometimes progresses under the soothing influence of a cigar—if

the single ones could define how many an offer an Indian weed has prompted—if the married ones could but learn what an excellent explosion-valve a good havannah affords to the irritated mind,—we suspect the practice would experience much more indulgence at their hands than it does; and this is said with the most disinterested motives: for ourselves, we have long since resigned the pleasing habit to sterner digestions.

In the present instance, as Herbert gently puffed away the light-blue curling wreaths, and saw them vanish into thin air, many a fair scheme arose before him equally unstable. Beguiled by the flattering narcotic, he dreamed he should be able once more to reconcile himself to the father, and, by addressing himself to his strong reason, adduce before him arguments that not even his prejudice should be able to resist.

"Moreover," continued our hero, "I am sure he will be open to the suggestion that, although I have erred, I have already received a severe punishment, and that, for his daughter's sake, as well as mine, he ought to temper justice with mercy."

From this consideration of the subject, by a most natural transition, our hero began to calculate on the chances that existed of his obtaining an interview with Nautila, and what effect it was probable would have been produced upon her mind by the discovery of the bet.

Here, lover-like, he was quite unable to persuade himself that he might not with ease recover all the ground he had lost; and, while planning some mode of informing his enchantress of his presence on board, he leaned his head back on the paddle-wheel, to consider this question more fully, one or two words came to his ear of so potent a significance, as for a time to banish from his thoughts even the all-engrossing subject of his desired interview with his mistress.

Thinking at first that his ears must have deceived him as to the import of what he had heard, he listened again attentively, and distinctly recognized the words,—

"I tell you, you fool, there is no difficulty either in our rising or seizing the ship; the only question is, when we've got the swag, where shall we go to enjoy it? It's quite clear the States will never do for us; we shan't be safe there, neither should we be able to remain in any part of the continent."

"Well," said the other voice, "there's lots of fun to be had elsewhere besides the States and the continent—there's all the rest of the world after that."

"Yes," said the other voice, "you seem to forget that the whole of our object in this matter is the money; and, after you've left out of the catalogue Europe and America, there's not many other places where money is much worth spending."

"Oh, gammon as to that," replied the other: "you are but a poor sort of geographer, if you think so; see what fun we might have if we had plenty of tin, either along the whole of the shores

of South America, or in Columbia, or Mexico, or the Spanish main; or even, for the matter of that, there's Persia. See what a jolly life a man might live there that had, as the old song says, 'as much money as he could tell.' Leave me alone for finding out a pleasant place for spending the tin, if you'll only convince me that the money is safe on board, and can be had for the rising. Besides those men you've mentioned, there are one or two friends of mine on board here—backwoodsmen, regular Lynch-law justices, who would care no more about the screams of a few silly women and old men, than they would about the whistling of a thrush, and would just as soon wring the neck of one as the other; but, as far as my opinion is concerned, I can't help thinking you are mistaken about the money: it seems so large a sum for one old fogie to possess, seventy thousand pounds does; and, as far as we can see, he has *nobody* to have it, either. If he were a lord, now, or any person of that sort, there would be some reason in the matter; but a plain old fellow like that, who I'm told has passed the best of his days in the woods, seventy thousand pounds does seem a large sum, surely."

"Oh, lard! it's nothing for one of these English fellows. I'm told he's some poor, cracked old devil, who has got some sort of a notion that men live happier poor than rich: as to the money, I'll swear that's on board, for I took very good care to learn all about that before he came. You know my relation is —" The office of his relation was mentioned in a very low tone of voice, so that our hero could not hear it: but the speaker quickly followed it up by saying, that "he heard the amount from the ship's clerk, and it tallies exactly with the private information that I got from the officer on shore—it's seventy thousand pounds if it's a penny; and it's all in right hard coin, I can tell you that. I hear it took the old chap a considerable time before he could get so much metal together; and even then, with our infernal paper banks, it was no joke."

"And, pray, what the devil is his name—his real name, I mean?"

"Ha! that I don't know. He goes here on board by the name of Charles, I'm told; but that's not his real title. I shouldn't be at all surprised but he turns out to be some codger of note, some great man in disguise, or something of that sort. Well, great or small, I can tell him he's brought his pigs to a wrong market."

"I think that's more than likely. It will be a bloody piece of business before we've done with it, for with all that money the old man will be sure to die game."

"He be hanged! I don't care how he dies. We'll get rid of him somehow or other, and then we'll draw lots for his daughter; she's a tidy piece of goods, by all account. Have you seen her, Bill?"

Up to this period Herbert had borne with great philosophy the

virtuous proposal which he had overheard, and which evidently had for its object to cut the throat of his intended father-in-law, and to seize the property which was once to have been his own; but now, when the scoundrel proceeded to call the adored one of his devotions a tidy piece of goods, no consideration sufficed to induce him to bear any longer unmoved in silence the insufferable audacity of these villains. Hitherto he had been anxious to hear as much of their plot as possible before moving from the favourable post of observation which he now occupied.

The speakers, whoever they were, were evidently sitting on the foremost part of the same paddle-box as that which now supported him. No doubt they had chosen this post partly from its possessing the same qualities which recommended it to himself, namely, its seclusion, though they had evidently wished to turn this to a very different purpose from that which actuated Herbert.

The fact was, however, that the circular form of the paddle-box, aided by the current of air produced by the ship's quick passage through the water, brought to the ear of any person sitting astern of them a most distinct report of their conversation, the paddle-box acting as a sort of inverted whispering gallery, and also effectually concealing from their view any one who sat behind it. Herbert had heard enough, however, to show him that the plans of these ruffians had as yet reached no distinct maturity of purpose further than a general design of plunder. And as it would be highly inexpedient to give them premature information of being watched, our hero determined to content himself with marking out the identification of the persons of the conspirators. For this purpose he found that it would be prudent not to walk over the top of the paddle-box, as he had at first contemplated, and so break boldly in upon their council, but rather to quit his present post, walk round to the head of the forecabin, and there, by looking aft like any unconcerned spectator, gain an opportunity of minutely inspecting the enemy, without giving them any notice that they had attracted his regard.

CHAPTER XXXII.

“ Yankee Doodle was the boy,
And he was double-jointed ;
He thought to take our steamship too,
But was he disappointed ?”

American Anthem.

HAVING executed the manœuvre mentioned in the last chapter with as little noise as possible, Herbert gazed steadily at the persons of the two speakers from beneath the shadow of his hand, as he pretended to lean across the bulwarks, lost in thought. By this means he was enabled to impress on his memory every particular of their persons.

Soon after Herbert had taken this special recognizance of the enemy, they both rose and mingled among the crew and passengers on the forecastle. Whoever they might be, they seemed perfectly known to many of the men who acted on board the *Atlantic*. Herbert longed to put some inquiry as to who they might be, but, afraid of his motives being detected, he pursued a better course than that of standing unconcerned by amusing himself with his cigar, but keeping his ears wide open to ascertain, if possible, by what denomination the plotters were known.

Several men spoke to them, and they kept up the conversation ; but all that passed was veiled in a sort of slang, of which Herbert understood nothing. The only name that the chief of the plotters appeared to be hailed by was that of Boston Bill, while his companion was call Yankee Doodle.

The whole of their discourse more and more convinced Herbert that danger was impending of a very imminent and formidable kind, and that, unless met with equal promptness and determination, it would, in all probability, overwhelm those in whom he took so strong an interest.

This certainly was intelligence worth gaining, though Boston Bill's and Yankee Doodle's names did not add very greatly to its value. What was the best step to avert the threatened danger ? Would his best plan be at once to communicate what he had heard to the captain ? But then Herbert had not as yet had an opportunity of forming any judgment as to the disposition and capacities of the latter ; and it was a rule with him to trust no one in any affair of importance, unless he was convinced from

personal acquaintance with the party that he was able to conduct it to a successful issue.

Should he communicate what he had heard to Major Symonds, and consult with him? A moment's reflection, however, convinced him that the major would be the very last person to deliberate calmly on the perils of a dangerous position. An excellent man in action, no doubt, and when once a hostile line of operations had been resolved upon, he was the person of all others to carry it into execution. For any employment prior to this, his temperament was evidently far too impetuous. Herbert knew no one else on board, except the old man, and, under existing circumstances, he might perhaps have viewed with suspicion any statement of Herbert's as likely to have been produced by his wish to be once more thrown into contact with *Nautila*.

Perilous, then, as his information might prove to all on board, he was obliged to confine the matter to his own bosom, and wait for a few days to see how the case would turn up. Of this he was sure, that if there really did exist any plot among the crew to seize the ship for the sake of any treasure she might be carrying, nothing but superior force on the part of the officers and passengers could prevent its being put into execution; and the only advantage that could be gained by privity of the design, was that of guarding against a surprise; while, on the contrary, if any premature steps were taken by the captain, as seizing and fettering the two malcontents whom he had overheard, it might be the very means of precipitating that mutiny which he was so anxious to avoid.

It was a question replete with difficulties on every side; and, finally convinced that no instant danger threatened his friends, he resolved to ponder upon the matter, and give it a full consideration before he took any active steps. While pacing up and down, thus debating with himself, he happened to turn his eyes to the quarter-deck, and there, to his astonishment, he beheld *Nautila*, accompanied by the old housekeeper, emerge from the cabin, and commence walking on the quarter-deck. The interest with which he watched her feeble steps may easily be imagined. She, like himself, had also evidently suffered severely, and looked pale and melancholy.

Now was the time, as the shades of evening were rapidly darkening, to obtain an interview, could he only by any possibility detach her abominable duenna. How was it to be managed?

"Let me see—to be sure—yes—I know, on such an emergency, the gallant major would undertake to make love to her for an hour, and is there any one of the softer sex, Heaven bless them! under the age of seventy, insensible to the influence of the tender passion? Forbid it, Cupid, even to think so; but where is the gallant major? As I don't see him on the quarter-deck, I suppose he must still be adoring the bottle, and though it may not be quite to his taste to summon him away to a less exciting mistress, I am sure it would be infinitely better for his constitution."

Hastily scribbling a few lines on a piece of paper, Herbert despatched them by one of the under-stewards to the saloon, and in a few minutes the gallant major appeared, his good-humoured countenance beaming resplendently from his devotion to the rosy god, and his step, it must be confessed, not quite so steady as he had sometimes known it on parade.

"Well, my dear boy," said the major, "what do you want?"

"Why, my dear major, I am obliged to call on you to do me a friendly office."

"With all my heart," said the major; "but we need not trouble ourselves about that until we get to the shore any how. Who's your man?"

"Oh, I see, major, you mistake the service I wish you to render me. It is not an affair of honour, but one of love, simply."

"Of love! Well, if possible, that's more agreeable than the other. Heaven save the boy! His heart's as full of love as an egg is of meat. Pity you were not born in Ireland, my boy—that great tenderness you have for the fair sex would have been fully appreciated."

"Thank you, captain, kindly, for your good wishes; but in or out of Ireland, with your able assistance, I hope yet it will meet with all the appreciation that I desire."

"If I've any hand in the matter, it shall; but what is it I can do for you now?"

"Why, you see that old lady up there, with the light blue cloak?"

"I see her—yes!—but, odds, zounds, my boy, she's sixty-five, if she's a day. You haven't taken a liking to her by way of a change, have you?"

"No, my boy, I have not; but I want you to do so."

"Want me?" said the Irishman, with a look of horror and real anger. "This may be a very fine joke, for anything I know; but there's few men in the world less fond of practical joking than I am; and, as far as the thing has gone yet, it appears to me to be exceedingly personal, and so I fairly tell you, Mr. Herbert."

"Prithee, don't kill me with laughing," replied our hero, "or I shall never be able to give you my explanation."

"I'm glad, sir, you have an explanation to offer," said the peppery Irishman.

"To be sure I have, if you would only give me time to speak it. Don't you see the young girl who accompanies the other?"

"Well, sir!"

"Well, she is Miss St. John, and I am dying for an opportunity to get a word or two with her; but it's utterly impossible, while that old sphinx continues by her side. Now, all I want you to do is, to make love to the old one, while I get a few words with the younger party."

"With all the pleasure in life. Oh, I now see what you are driving at!—and a mighty pretty *divertissement* as could well be conceived or executed! Make love to her! egad, by this and by that she shall think that the young days of sixteen are come again; and, as to seeing you exchange a few amatory passes with her young charge, she shall know no more about it than if one lived in the moon, and the other inhabited the planet of Ursa Major."

"Don't you mistake the latitude, and get hold of Ursa Major, for she is a regular old duenna, and knows right well what she is about."

"If she were even the dog Cerberus, instead of its namesake, the duenna, I'd soon have every eye fixed on me so completely, that you might take a bone off the plate, and she not be a bit the wiser for it."

"Well, then," said Herbert, "you give Nautila this card, on which I will write a word or two, telling her that I am here, and will try to gain an interview with her; and then, when I see that you have fairly absorbed old Mother Cerberus, as you call her, I will step up on the quarter-deck, and get a word or two with Nautila."

"Ah, that will do very well. Now, let me see; how shall I open the campaign? You haven't got such a thing as a bottle of any particular kind of smelling salts, have you? It wouldn't be a bad way of gently insinuating the interest we take in Cerberus's welfare."

"I have no smelling salts," said Herbert; "but I'll tell you what—you'll find, lying at the very top of my carpet-bag, a bottle of the most superb French perfume, which will answer your purpose much better. The old soul will be sure to have a bottle of smelling salts herself, while there is as much chance of her having smelled at the philosopher's stone almost as the other. Here are my keys; but pray don't be long—you can fancy the agony of impatience I suffer."

"Long! the blinking of stars shall be a dawdler to me."

"And, I say, major——"

"What is it?"

"Walk as steadily as you can, for Cerberus, I know, has a particular dread of gentlemen after the third bottle."

"Oh, you mistake entirely," said the major; "it must be the rolling of the ship which deceived you. I'm as steady as a church; and, as to the third bottle, by the Lord of Innisfail, I've only had just a wee glass or two over the second: and, upon my conscience, it requires every drop of the liquor to screw me up in such a case—mark you, in such a case to screw me up to the proper love-making point."

Saying which, the gallant major forthwith departed to the saloon.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

“ I own I once heard of an amorous youth.”

TOM MOORE.

IN a few minutes the major reappeared upon the quarter-deck, with a white handkerchief in one hand, and a cut glass scent-bottle in the other, and began applying first the one and then the other alternately to his olfactory organs with great industry, endeavouring the while to conjure up his best quarter-deck step, and walk along with as little appearance of the second bottle as might be possible. Herbert looked on infinitely amused ; and the effort which the gallant officer made certainly did him great credit. Nothing but a practised seaman’s eye could have detected in his roll something more active than the motion of the steamer.

For a few turns the major walked up and down the quarter-deck, as if he had no object in view but to take care of himself. Presently, in the neatest manner possible, he contrived just to touch the duenna on the elbow, as if the roll of the ship had temporarily proved too much for him ; then, in the politest manner in the world, he begged her pardon with the utmost grace, and a degree of deference that must have gone far to persuade the old soul that she looked liked a duchess at least. The effect was instantaneous. Up to that moment, she, who had been looking as gloomy and wretched as well could be, brightened up into a most gracious smile, and instantly granted the pardon that was sought.

The next turn, the major, with that jaunty sort of off-hand air which most military men and all Irishmen possess to perfection, made another winning bow, and, proffering the bottle of French scent, at once boldly joined the fair couple, and, with the utmost pathos and gallantry, exclaimed,—

“ Madam, I am quite grieved to see how soon this villanous sea air has banished that charming colour which I observed upon your cheek not many hours ago. Allow me to recommend to your notice this inimitable specific against sea-sickness. You have only to smell it a few times, and you will be quite yourself again. Take it—take it, ma’am ; don’t be afraid of it—there is nothing in it that can possibly hurt you. It was first recommended to me by my father, the general. I have tried it constantly for years throughout all my services, for we army officers, ma’am, are not accustomed, in our profession, to be constantly at sea ; and, on my

honour, a finer specific for sea-sickness I never knew, ma'am; and the best of it is, it is as pleasant in the taking as in the operation. Is it not fine, ma'am?" he continued, as the wary old soul most unsuspectingly applied the end of an antique beak to the mouth of the bottle.

"It is, sir, very refreshing," replied she, quite taken in by the praises bestowed upon her charming colour.

"I am quite proud and delighted, ma'am, that it has the good fortune to gain your approval. Sweet as it was before, believe me it will gain fresh odours by being employed in the service of so fair a lady. Upon my honour, ma'am, your colour is actually coming back even already. By my honour, I never saw so great a triumph of this specific before!"

"Oh, sir, you are too flattering!" handing back the bottle to the audacious major.

"Not at all, ma'am, not at all. Allow me to hand it to your sister here, to see if it has the happiness of meeting also with her approval."

"My sister, sir!" simpered the duenna. "Dear me, sir, it's not my sister."

"Not your sister, ma'am?" exclaimed the major, pretending to start back in the utmost surprise.

"No, indeed it's not, sir."

"Well, you *do* surprise me; in the whole course of my services I never saw so wonderful a likeness. Why, she's your living picture."

"Oh, sir, do you think so?"

"Isn't it generally considered so, ma'am?" said the major, turning now with his antidote for sea-sickness to Nautila; and, as he held out the bottle, standing between the duenna and herself, Herbert observed him slip our hero's note into his mistress's hand, whispering at the same time,—"From Herbert—say nothing."

Here the parties turned round at the end of their walk once more towards the stern, when Nautila dropped immediately behind her companions, and read these lines:—

"At last, my love, I have discovered you; pretend to go down into the saloon for another shawl, and you will find me instantly at your side, anxious to assure you once more how devotedly I remain your own—Herbert."

Poor Nautila, so little did she dream of this happiness being at hand, that our hero while he stood watching her could perceive her little hands trembling as she endeavoured to place beneath the folds of her dress the card he had sent her.

For some moments she almost hesitated whether she ought to go or not, her father had laid such strict injunctions on her abstaining from any future intercourse with the man to whom he himself had allowed her to form the most enduring attachment. Up to this time, however, she had always so implicitly obeyed his

slightest wish, that, though this meeting was one of which she had dreamt by day and night for months past, and sighed for its advent in almost hopeless despondency, yet, now that it was here, a vague and indefinable terror seemed to forbid her availing herself of the opportunity of exchanging a few words with one who possessed all her affections. It was only for a few brief seconds this indecision lasted:—"For once, surely for this once, there can be no harm in my granting him the simple request he makes, and to think, poor fellow, with what untiring faithfulness he has pursued us! Surely such love demands a better return than any coldness on my part, whatever feelings my father may entertain. And yet there is something so dreadful in concealment! Oh, how I will urge him at once to discover himself to my father, and free me from such an alternative as these clandestine meetings."

The next moment she advanced to Mrs. Cerberus, and said:—

"I am going below to fetch another shawl; I will be back in a few minutes."

So far from that good dame having even one eye to bestow upon Nautila out of a hundred, there can be little doubt that, had she possessed two hundred instead of two, the gallant major would have engaged them all. Whatever the story might be that he was pouring into her willing ear, its magic was complete, for she, whose visage would generally have served for a tombstone at the shortest notice, was now indulging in the most uproarious laughter, and could only afford a hasty nod in answer to Nautila's declared intention of going below.

"Well," thought Herbert, "whether the matter be stealing a watch from the fob, or a heart from the breast, it is quite evident and clear to me that the operation is infinitely better performed by two than one. What a lucky chance it was that Symonds was left behind!"

Presently Herbert heard a light footstep on the companion-ladder, under the shadow of which he had concealed himself; one glance at the exquisite hand that leaned for support upon the rail sufficed to convince him who it was that approached; those taper fingers offered no resistance as he pressed them fervently to his lips, and in another moment her heart was beating beside his own.

Seating themselves in the corner of the saloon to which the lamplight did not reach very fully, it may easily be imagined how perfect was the joy that possessed the lovers at this unexpected and happy meeting. Passing over those terms of endearment in which young people so naturally indulge under these circumstances, Herbert, after the first joyful felicitation on their renewed intimacy had past, demanded, with considerable anxiety, what were the intentions entertained by the father as to his future proceedings.

On these, however, Herbert learned, without much surprise,—

that Nautila was in a state of perfect ignorance further than this point, that the old man had collected and realized all the property he possessed in America, and that he never intended to revisit it again. In what part of Europe they were now to find their home, whether in England or on some part of the continent, Nautila knew no more than Herbert; of this, however, she could and did inform him certainly, that all the property which her father had possessed in America was at present converted into gold, and at that very time on board the *Atlantic*.

This convinced Herbert that the diabolical plot which he had overheard had solid ground for its existence. Finally, Nautila used every argument in her power to persuade her lover to communicate the fact of his being on board to her father, exchanged with him renewed vows of love, though this was, indeed, unnecessary; and, when half an hour having swiftly passed away, our heroine, apprehensive of a discovery, returned to the quarter-deck, there she found the gallant major still busy pouring forth his adulations at the shrine of the defeated duenna.

On the appearance of Nautila, the worthy lady seemed to think three an unsuitable number in affairs of this character, and, wishing the major good night in the blindest of all possible terms, hastily withdrew. Herbert watched them as they retired from the deck into their cabins, and, rejoining his confederate aloft, the two young men indulged in the most uproarious mirth at the expense of the worthy antique who had just left them. Herbert returned, as he well might, his best thanks to the major for his admirable and effective aid, and the latter vowed there was more fun than might be at first supposed in making love to a lady of sixty-five.

Other conversation succeeded of a style not very likely to interest the reader, and the steward then summoning them to coffee, they withdrew below.

CHAPTER XXXIV

"I am no orator, as Brutus is."

Julius Cæsar.

As soon as coffee was cleared away, and while all the gentlemen in the saloon were still seated at the table, the gallant major leant over to Herbert, and said, "Now, my boy, I'm going to treat the company to a bit of a speech. Whenever I come to a pause, mind that's the time to applaud me, and all that I am waiting for is two or three good thwacks on the mahogany with this little persuader." As he said this, he put into Herbert's hand a snuff-box, so heavy and solid, that it was almost like a small ingot of silver. "Rale eloquence, after all, is but mutual satisfaction between the speaker and his auditory."

"Ladies and gentlemen," said the modest major, rising on his legs after this little preparation, "as it is not improbable, barring all accidents of wind and weather, that the most respectable assemblage whom I now see before me, may remain on board this steamer for some ten days yet to come, permit me to suggest, with all deference to you, that it would contribute vastly to the shortening of those weary moments when we are out of our element—that is, I mean, when we are fish out of water at sea—if we were to form some little scheme at the outset, a sort of programme, as it were, of the general amusements to be had recourse to during the voyage. Now, for my own part, I confess I think we could not do better than by instituting on this Wednesday, the 11th of March, the first of our Saturday Nights at sea." A general roar followed this somewhat Irish proposition. "The honourable members on the back benches seem to consider this a bull, but if I were to be cowed, ladies, by their roaring, I should deserve to be considered a great calf." Here a fresh roar followed. "I trust, however," continued the gallant speaker, "I have too much of the milk of human kindness to require that you should butter me in this way with your applause," looking down at Herbert, "in order freely to forgive you a laugh at my expense. However, gentlemen, having fairly baited your bull to death, I will proceed: Saturday night at sea is sacred to sweethearts and wives, and whether, gentlemen, you are steaming it along to the one, or running away from the other, you cannot be too often reminded of your felicity. By the assistance of the steward, I propose forthwith to brew an inexhaustible bowl of inimitable punch, and that around this we proceed to elect our future master

of the ceremonies, who shall reign over us for the remainder of the voyage; and whether we agree to amuse ourselves with private theatricals, tableaux vivants, rhymes at times, song and supper, or any other elegant entertainment, we will refer all matters of debate to his superior good taste and judgment.

"And, in short, gentlemen, not to detain you, my plan is simply to obtain the utmost possible quantity of fun with the least possible delay, and whoever can show me the best mode of doing this shall have my entire support for one. What say ye, gentlemen? Is it a good proposition, and one to which you can all of you cry, ay?"

Repeated shouts of the word "ay! ay!" from all parts of the saloon, seemed to the gallant speaker as satisfactory a proof of the popularity of his motion as could possibly be desired; and Herbert, keeping the general uproar well in countenance, with the most astounding din, the major concluded by turning round, and, with a most emphatic tap of the two forefingers of his right hand upon the palm of his left, exclaimed:

"Now, then, steward, bring the materials; the word is punch, and the only answer we will have is the materials!"

Here the applause became most vociferous indeed.

The company at large needed no second invitation to gather round the table on which the gallant brigadier rapidly proceeded to brew with the materials in question, and when his office was completed, and the result was distributed to the various parties who appeared willing to partake of the same, they proceed at once to the election of a master of the ceremonies. Different parties were named; some voted for one and some for another. Symonds vowed and declared he would give his own vote to no one but neighbour Broadbrim the quaker, and though the friend loudly protested not only against all acceptance of the office, but even against the slightest tolerance of the vanities which it was intended to promote, this did not hinder our brigadier from giving his vote as he declared he would in Broadbrim's favour; nor even prevent Broadbrim himself from pledging the major in a small glass, in which he begged to wish him a better office than that which his new acquaintance wished to impose upon him, namely, the master of the ceremonies.

The voices being now duly collected, the lot was declared to have fallen very properly upon him who first proposed the election; for as several of the voters remarked, who could so well carry out the spirit of the proposition as the able and gallant major with whom it originated? The choice having very properly fallen upon Symonds, he, as in duty bound, proceeded to return thanks, "termed the present the happiest and pleasantest moment of his life," &c. &c., and finally "assured his constituents," in a manner that won full credit to his assertion, "that since they had thought fit to elect him to the office, he would take especial care that his powers should not lie idle."

His health was then drunk with a modest degree of hilarity, and a discussion ensued as to the amusements with which it would be most fitting to cheer their subsequent ten days, which the worthy major declared should be called Symonds' Decameron, and the voices having been considerably in favour of private theatricals, various plays were next proposed.

This discussion seeming likely to be lengthened out considerably, the master of the ceremonies very consistently exercised his newly-acquired powers in adjourning it until the following day.

"In the meanwhile, gentlemen, I will call upon any good-natured fellow among us for a song."

This demand suddenly brought the previous jocularly of the meeting to a halt—a dead silence ensued.

"Gentlemen," said Symonds, "if there is one quality above all others calculated to win my respect and affections, it is modesty. I cannot tell you, therefore, how sensibly I am affected on finding myself master of the ceremonies in a society where every man is too modest to think of amusing his neighbours himself, and too bashful to call upon any friend to do it for him; perceiving, therefore, most clearly that you are all of you only waiting for some one to set the example, and knowing, as I well do, how much is expected from people in high stations, I perceive I cannot do better than attempt to justify the flattering choice you recently made in my favour, by setting you a good example of starting the first song myself."

"Bravo—well said!" was echoed on all side.

"But, gentlemen," said the major, as he resumed his chair, "for one thing be prepared: when I finish my song, I shall consider myself to have a call in return."

"Of course, of course."

"And this privilege will be possessed by every singer after me."

"Yes, yes."

"Those gentlemen who can't sing, may content themselves with telling a story."

"Very fair, very fair."

"No gentleman shall feel himself at liberty to tell the same story between this and Spithead; and he who thus breaks down into prose, shall be witty in his narratives; and if he can't be witty, he shall be next best to it, and that is, gentlemen—d—d short."

"Friend, friend," said neighbour Broadbrim very gravely, "if thee dost use any more profane language, thou shalt no longer be master of the ceremonies. I myself will make void thy election."

A laugh here followed at this sally of the quaker's. Some voice called out, "The major's song."

"Coming directly, sir," replied the major, in a voice so exactly like that of one of the under-stewards, who was in the habit of making that answer about four times in every quarte

of an hour, that a fresh roar succeeded, in which Herbert too joined, for, having had comparatively little opportunity of knowing the major up to this time, he had never had an opportunity of seeing him at what he himself called—full cock.

When the laugh had subsided, the brigadier launched forth with a full, deep, manly voice, into a true bachelor's ditty. After his song, the major, of course, had his call. He looked round the company for a minute or two, as if in search of what they call a singing countenance, and his eye presently lighting on the jolly face of neighbour Broadbrim, he, without more ado, protested that the quaker should favour the company with a song. Broadbrim immediately pleaded to the jurisdiction, and declared, "He did not vote for the master of the ceremonies, nor belong to their worldly frivolities."

This objection, as might have been expected, the major at once overruled; and one or two of the party having, with a gentle violence, heaved the chair of the quaker close to the table, and refilled his glass, a little more persuasion, in Dennis Symonds' own style, at length brought forth his song.

The quaker never moved a muscle of his face, save those which commanded the tongue and the eye, during the whole of the operation. He sat bolt upright, with his front directly facing the other members round him, his mouth open, at just such a distance as enabled him to get his words out, and in that position kept it rigidly fixed, moving his eye occasionally from side to side, as if to watch the effect which his song produced upon the company at large. The ridiculous contrast between his gravity and the joke of his song, altogether appeared so absurd that roars of laughter accompanied its execution.

Several of the ladies, who were sufficiently accustomed to the sea to remain in the cabin, seemed greatly to enjoy the sport of this. Nautila, however, was not among these, nor was the major's flame, Mrs. Cerberus; and our hero rightly concluded that it was the fastidiousness of the father which would not permit his daughter to mix in any such festivity, for aught that could approach, or in any way be termed vulgar, was his most special dread and abhorrence.

Thus, in this merry mood, the rest of the evening passed on, song succeeding song; tale, story, and laughter filled up the pauses; at last the hours began to grow late, and Herbert resolved to take a final turn on the quarter-deck before seeking his pillow.

CHAPTER XXXV.

“There’s a storm in the whistling blast.”

Song.

WHEN our hero reached the deck above, the wind had changed. It was a bright, clear, cold night, and the stars were as distinctly visible as if it had been a perfect frost. The ship was going rapidly through the water, and apparently no one seemed to dream of an unfavourable passage.

Soothed by the interview he had lately obtained with Nautila, dreams of hope once more began to assert their happy influence over his spirits. Already he fancied he had succeeded in overcoming the prejudices of the father, and, in thought, was once more admitted a happy lover of his fair betrothed, the voyage peacefully concluded, and all sorts of fair and bright visions beaming around him. Absorbed in these delightful reveries, our hero had paced the deck for more than an hour, when, suddenly looking up once more at the various auguries of the weather around him, he perceived in the quarter from whence the wind came that peculiar assemblage of long feathery-streaked clouds which sailors are accustomed to denominate mare’s tails, and from which they so frequently are enabled to tell of approaching gales of wind. Something not unlike a sigh escaped Herbert’s breast as he looked at this ill omen, and in doing so, his ear was attracted by a shrill melancholy moaning of the troubled breeze, as it swept through the interstices of the rigging.

“I don’t like that!” our hero exclaimed in a loud voice, halting instantly in his walk upon the quarter-deck, and happening to pause not far from the officer of the watch, who was the second mate at that time, wiling the weary hour away by a short turn or two before the binnacle, leaning over occasionally, and peeping in at the compass-card to see that the man at the helm kept the course correctly, and then marking with his eye the weather-leech of the fore-topsail, which seemed to cut against “a bright particular star” in the deep blue vault above, as the magnificent steamer rose gradually over the vast waves on which she floated.

“What is it you don’t like, sir?” asked the mate, as he heard Herbert giving involuntary voice to this exclamation, judging from the tone in which it was uttered, that it had relation to some portent in the atmosphere which he had not himself remarked,

and judging from the carriage and exterior of our friend that he was no novice in matters of the sea.

"What is it I don't like?" repeated Herbert. "Why, to tell you the truth, I don't like that moan of the wind which I heard a few minutes since."

"Don't you, indeed?" replied the mate; "well, to my mind, that same sighing of the breeze, and the cawing of a rook, are two of the pleasantest sounds I know in nature."

"Ah!" said Herbert, "I see you haven't taken my remark in the sense in which I meant it. I never intended to say that I disliked the sighing of the breeze generally; on the contrary, the sounds you name are some of the most poetical as well as musical in the world; but it was that peculiar kind of music that I object to, for there is generally some terrible accompaniment to be heard soon after it."

"Peculiar, sir! I heard nothing peculiar—more than the general sighing of the breeze."

"No! I did; though it might, to be sure, be only my fancy; but, through all the years that I've been at sea, I never heard that particular moaning of the air but once, and then followed such a tempest as I hope never to see again in my time."

"Was it so terrible, sir?"

"Oh, terrific! although I live here to-day to tell it. The heaven above that saved us alone can tell how. Hark! there is the same sound again! didn't you hear it?"

"Why, I think I did hear it then; but I must confess, if you had not mentioned it to me, it wouldn't have struck me as anything more than I have often heard before: it only seems a little more melancholy."

"Very melancholy, indeed!" said Herbert; "all sighings of the wind are melancholy at all times, but that peculiar note is the most melancholy of any."

"Well, now, sir, don't you think, when you come to reason on it, that it must all be a mere matter of chance, because we know that one sound is only more melancholy than another according as the cranny the wind rushes through may be different in form or size."

"It would, indeed, seem so at first," admitted Herbert; "but sad experience is an irresistible master of paradoxes. The last time I heard that sound it was just such a night as this; not the least sign of wind or foul weather to be seen, except just that self-same thing that you see out yonder."

"Where, sir: those straying mares' tails yonder?"

"Precisely; and yet thousands lived to rue that night, and thousands, I may well say, never lived through it. We were in the West Indies, and the whole islands in that part were a series of wrecks and ruins. Now I come to look at it, I cannot say, however, that I particularly admire the crest of the sea to-night."

"It's bright and clear."

"Yes; but look at those sluggish waves; don't they look, for all the world, as if some vast spirit had his hand upon them, keeping them down. Take my word for it, Mr. Mate, twelve hours won't pass over your head and mine before those waves run as high or higher than our foretop."

"Well, what you say is very singular; we shall see what comes of it."

"Ay," said Herbert, shaking his head, "we may all live to see what comes of it; but who may live to see what goes of it is a very different matter."

"Oh, we shall be sure to do that," said the mate; "she's a new ship."

"I hope we may," responded our hero; "but I'd rather not be caught in an Atlantic gale in your new ship for all that; remember she's very long for her beam."

"Oh, she must go through the water well, she's a clipper at that fun. If there was ever such a sea to come on, she'd manage to run away, and leave it somehow."

"A clipper for running, certainly," said Herbert; "but if a gale is to be weathered, and in the Atlantic, too, give me a good round tub of a sea-boat."

While this colloquy had been passing on the quarter-deck, a deep fog had been gradually falling down upon the steamer's weather-bow; and when the mate looked up, he could no longer behold the bright star that had been shining at the weather-leech of the fore-topsail.

"By Jove, see how suddenly that fog has got round us!" said the mate, attracting Herbert's attention; "a few seconds ago it was as bright as day: it is very singular."

Scarcely had the words passed the mate's lips, when a cry of horror arose from the fore-castle; and both Herbert and the mate looking forward, they beheld, with irrepressible excitement, a large globe, as if of fire, of a pale blue lambent description, you could scarcely decide whether it ought to be called flame or not, rolling suddenly inboard from the point of the bowsprit. It paused for an instant on the head-rail, and then, continuing its course until it rolled down upon the fore-castle, became suddenly lost to sight. Those who beheld it could hardly say whether it vanished or whether it expired. Some maintained one position, some another; but this all were unanimous in affirming, that it had been distinctly visible to all on deck, and had ceased to become so on reaching the spot in question.

"What, sir, is that?" gasped forth the mate, who seemed transfixed with horror, until a few seconds after the disappearance of this truly fearful phenomenon.

"Heaven only knows!" said Herbert.

"Have you ever seen it before, sir?" asked the mate.

"Yes, once," answered our hero, with a peculiarity of tone which

needed no further question to show that once alluded to the dreadful storm before mentioned.

"This is dreadfully horrible, sir," continued the other. "I had thought my nerves were equal to anything; but if ever a man felt what a coward's feelings are, I think they are mine at this moment:" and the young man, who appeared a well-educated, sensible person, lifting his hand to his forehead, tottered toward the bulwarks.

"Don't allow yourself to be overcome in this way," said our hero, kindly; "you must often have read of this, though you may never have chanced to have seen it before; at the worst, it only means that a gale of wind is at hand; and, trying as the sight may be to mortal nerves, it is, perhaps, but a kind warning of that Great Being, in whose hand we all are, to prepare us for coming danger."

"Well, sir, perhaps that is the most reasonable view to take of it. If you will be kind enough to take charge of the ship for a few minutes, I will just go and let the captain hear what we have seen. For though the ship has been made pretty snug, he might, perhaps, like to know that we are threatened with a gale."

"That I think he would, undoubtedly; the weather was fair enough when he went to bed; and if we are going to have such a twisting as I suspect, he might like to have it seen forthwith that the boats are well secured amidships, and everything ready to strike the topmast and lower yards."

"Why, yes, sir, I think he would; at any rate, he shall have a chance of doing so, if he thinks well to take the precaution. I won't be gone long." And giving Herbert the course that was required to be steered, the young man ran off to the cabin of the captain.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

“ There’s a sow-wester blowing, Billy ;
Don’t you hear it roar now ? ”

DIBDIN.

THUS left to his reflections, and in charge of the ship in which he had entered as a passenger, on the eve, too, as some silent conviction in his own bosom assured him, of no slightly-marked crisis in his own destiny, Herbert could not help reflecting deeply on the singular guidance by which he was now led through life, almost deprived of the slightest voice in deciding whither his own steps and actions might direct him.

Into whatever perils the destiny of Nautila, or her father, might be cast, he must now share them. At this he did not for an instant repine; indeed, attached to that gentle being as he had now become, he would have felt it far harsher to have been decreed to bear the burden of life without her sharing it, than to have been simply called upon to resign existence, she being the partner and consoler of that much-dreaded dissolution.

This may be a severe but it is an unerring test of love, when the object we adore has become so intertwined with our existence, that the latter possesses no value in our eyes unblest by the former. As a collateral proof that this is so, how rarely is affection of so vital a description to be found.

Herbert had often been in terrific gales at sea, and, with the generality of light-hearted sailors, scarcely cared whether they abated soon or late; nor, if the truth be confessed, cared very much whether they abated at all or not.

In the days of careless, roving bachelorship, and particularly when life is new, half its better joys yet untasted, and the mind wholly unschooled to bear with philosophy those bitter sorrows that at first possess a double keenness, life is really of little value; and again and again Herbert had felt before this how little it would cost him to resign the whole affair. Now, however, when fresh affections and attractions had sprung up in the hitherto desolate wilderness, it did seem at first rather hard, just as life was beginning to wear an enchanting aspect, that he should be called upon to resign it.

In these sorrowful reflections he was, however, fortunately for his own feelings, temporarily checked by the appearance at his side of the captain, who, partially dressed, had hurried from his

hammock, without waiting to put on either jacket or cap, fearful that his absence might prove detrimental to that duty which he so ably discharged.

"The night is altered since I stood here an hour or two ago," said the captain, as he looked anxiously around him. "Where is the gentleman who has taken charge of the ship for you," turning to the mate. Herbert stepped forward from the shadow of the bulwark, which partly concealed his figure; and the younger officer of the three pointing him out to the other's attention, the captain bowed to our hero, saying,—

"I am much obliged to you, sir, for taking charge of the deck for me for a few minutes. The weather, I am sorry to see, is rather fickle."

"It has been," said Herbert; "but, unless I'm out in my reckoning, you'll have it steady enough now, in a heavy gale from the northward and eastward."

The captain made no answer, but gazing upward, and studying the weather-horizon, replied,—

"Well, perhaps we may have a little hard weather from that quarter; but I have seen a more threatening night than this end peaceably enough. I don't like that snorting of the wind—certainly not."

"It was that attracted my attention at first," said Herbert.

The captain turned round, as if in some surprise, at this remark.

"Oh then," said he, "you are an old hand, sir, at reading dame Nature's volume, are you?"

"On the sea from childhood," was the answer.

"In the English navy?" asked the captain, giving the binnacle a tap, and putting his question, but without the slightest tincture of rudeness.

"No," said Herbert, not caring, in his present position, to make unnecessary confidants, "I've never served the king, nor queen either; but, nevertheless, were I captain of the *Atlantic*, I would make all right for a gale as soon as could be."

"Well, I think the advice is good, and so I'll take it. Turn the hands up to strike topmasts and lower yards."

The mate, to whom this order was given, immediately left the quarter-deck, and giving an order to some of the seamen on the fore-castle, in a few minutes the pipe of the boatswain was heard resounding through the ship, followed by the cry, "All hands ahoy!" "Strike topmasts and lower yards."

In a few minutes the seamen, thus disturbed from their slumbers, came running up on deck, and, joining to the others who formed the watch, the captain gave the necessary orders for striking the lower yards and topmasts; and no sail further than the close-reefed fore and main-topsails were shown to the breeze.

This duty accomplished, and the fastenings of the boats once more looked to, Herbert, convinced that all had now been done to

secure the safety of the ship, which remained in the power of the captain to command, and every preparation made to receive the coming gale that prudence could suggest, departed to his cot for the night.

Excited by the numerous events of the day, and not having for many nights before enjoyed the luxury of good rest, our hero was soon fast asleep. Although it was some time since he had been at sea, and the habit of sleeping soundly amid any disturbance was considerably impaired, it was not for some hours after thus retiring that he again awoke. No sooner, however, had he done so, than he became at once convinced of the perfect realization of all his forebodings of the previous night. The ship was pitching terrifically; everything seemed to be let loose upon her decks, so as to produce the most stunning noise overhead, while below, the ceaseless cries of the terrified ladies made the Babel still more severe and distressing. Hurrying on his clothes and rushing on deck, what a sight there met his gaze! As far as the eye could reach, the ocean everywhere presented a troubled mass of foam and billow; the latter tossed into the wildest fury by a gale, severe even then, and apparently increasing every instant in violence. The steamer herself was labouring frightfully under the pressure of the wind, which, having once more changed, was now dead on her starboard bow. Both topsails had, in the course of the night, been blown from their bolt-ropes; and, no attempt having been made to replace the canvas by fresh sails, in this state the empty leeches and sheets remained fluttering in the wind.

The steamer herself pitched fearfully into the seas instead of mounting over them; and as the long roll came, the vessel appeared too short to extend over more than two waves, and too long to ride easily over one. By this means it was apparent to all on board, that the whole strain of the steamer's weight fell just amidships, and as already this had to bear the burden of all the machinery, this was, of course, just at the spot where she was least able to support such straining without danger. Many of the passengers, alarmed like our hero by the confusion, had started from their sleep, and were now pacing the deck, their countenances amply disclosing the alarm that engrossed their minds, while, to crown their perplexity, every few minutes the water left the paddle-wheels so completely bare, that their whole force was expended on the air.

The captain and his mates were standing at the helm, which required all their strength to manage with anything like certainty of aim or purpose.

Steadying himself as he walked along the quarter-deck, which every now and then was deluged by the spray, our hero directed his steps to the binnacle, to look how the ship was steering. After gazing some minutes at the compass, and then carefully examining the weather-horizon, from which the gale poured itself down upon the devoted ship with increased fury, Herbert gave utterance to

his feelings of disappointment in a deep sigh, and was about to walk forward.

"Frightful weather this, sir," said the captain, whom Herbert had not yet addressed from a feeling of delicacy, as nothing is more annoying to an officer engaged in his duty than to be subjected to that perpetual species of interrogation with which idle passengers seem to think it their duty to afflict the commanders of the ships in which they travel. "You were not far wrong when you said we should have a capful of wind last night."

"I wish I had been," replied Herbert, "or that I could now see any signs of its moderating. But I fear, from all I can guess, it will be heavier yet before it will be lighter."

"Well, sir, that I can assure you is quite unnecessary; for, even now, it is as much as we can do to keep the ship manageable. If this gale had come on a few hours earlier, I would have put back into New York; but if I was to do it now, it would not save us much; either putting back or going on, we should have the worst of it."

"Oh! why?" said Herbert, considerably alarmed at the idea of the ship's putting back; "though the gale may be heavy, I hope there is nothing in it sufficiently spiteful to render putting back necessary. The only thing that appears to me is, your craft seems to strain a great deal amidships."

"Yes, that's her extreme length; and those heavy engines being placed just in the weakest part don't mend the matter."

The captain had scarcely finished these words, when a cry arose from forward,—

"Hold on! hold on!"

Every eye was instinctively turned to windward, and there an enormous green sea was seen coming down upon the bow of the steamer with a mantling crest of foam, that rushed on, rolling and tumbling, the picture of strife and confusion; and to the exaggerated fears of those who waited its assault in the hollow of the sea, while it came dashing down from above, it seemed as if it must inevitably break on the foretop of the steamer.

"Starboard! starboard your helm! down with it!" instinctively cried Herbert, in the excitement of the moment breaking the rule he had always observed, of never interfering with any other officer's guidance of his own ship.

But the gentleman whom he addressed was too good a fellow to feel any annoyance at this inadvertence, and good-humouredly answered,—

"Starboard it is."

Round flew the spokes, and the ship at once obeyed the motion of the rudder. But it was insufficient to save her altogether from the blow. With a shock that made her reel and shiver throughout her immense frame, the liquid mass rolled onward, and struck her full upon her weather-bow; and then, continuing to surge aft, whole volumes descended below, flooding the stokers in every

direction, until it swept onwards clean over the quarter-deck : and when the boiling, bubbling spray subsided from this exclusive post, seven black specks appeared in the white foam to leeward, and first drew Herbert's attention to the fact of some unhappy shipmates having jeopardied if not lost their lives.

"Men overboard ! men overboard !" cried he, as soon as he could eject the water from his mouth, for he had been perfectly deluged, as he clung to the weather-rigging, up a few rattlings of which he had prudently mounted, when he beheld the enormous sea sweeping aft with such resistless fury ; and now, anxious to effect everything that was still possible for the unhappy beings that had been swept overboard, leaped down to the quarter-deck to assist the captain to lower a boat if necessary : or, should this be deemed vain, to throw overboard some grating or other matter which might serve as a last hope to those whose hours were, in all probability, so nearly numbered.

From every single point upon the deck around him, little rivulets of salt water were now running down. Just before the sea struck, Herbert had noticed several passengers to leeward, though he did not recognize their persons ; and finding, as he jumped from the rigging, with his face toward the bow, that these parties were no longer to be seen, the conclusion at once forced itself upon his mind that these must be the ill-fated persons whose struggling forms he had just seen dotting the surf to leeward.

Turning swiftly round, as soon as he had reached the deck, to ask the captain what course must be pursued, his grief and horror may be imagined, when he beheld steerage-wheel, binnacles, captain, and mates, all gone !

Nothing but a slight wreck, where the wheel had been torn from the deck by the force of the water, remained to remind him that not one minute since he had seen standing there, in perfect health, and full of hope, the whole effective force of the ship's complement of officers !

Perched up securely in the rigging himself, where little more than the spray reached him, Herbert had not been able to form the least conception of the violence of that large body of water, as it poured its resistless fury on all it met ; and now, when his astonishment permitted him to gaze again, he perceived that not only had the fate of the captain been shared by his mates, together with every single passenger then walking on the quarter-deck, but that the jolly-boat had been dashed in atoms from its post astern, where no part of it remained any longer, but a few fragments of the davits by which it hung, and part of the tackle that had lately held it idly dangling in the gale.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

“There’s a sweet little cherub that sits up aloft,
To keep watch o’er the life of poor Jack.”

DIBDIN.

THE instant Herbert perceived what had happened, his first care was to seize the most available rope’s-end, and hastily lash the tiller amidships, no easy matter when, with every plunge of the ship, it was dashing backwards and forwards, traversing the iron chain by which it had been made to answer the steerage-wheel, and utterly guideless in its idle fury. This task achieved, he sprang forward, calling to the crew—

“All hands on deck.”

The boatswain’s mate obeyed his order; and, while the pipe was being repeated below, our hero had time to ask himself what it was he intended to do. At first, he thought of lowering one of the cutters and picking up the gallant captain and his mates. A second glance, however, at the terrific state of the sea, in which no boat could possibly live three minutes—reflection on the defenceless condition of the steamer, with her steerage-wheel and both compasses gone, and labouring so terrifically as she did, deterred him from this vain proceeding. “Should she once broach-to in the trough of the sea, farewell to all of us,” muttered Herbert. These considerations, therefore, appeared to him to render imperative his remaining deaf to the suggestions of private pity, and acting solely for the benefit of the public welfare. Resolving, however, not to take upon himself the sole responsibility of such a momentous decision, he, as soon as the seamen gained the deck, said hastily to them—

“My lads, I am sorry to tell you that last tremendous sea washed off from the quarter-deck every living soul upon it, and I only escaped by happening to run up into the weather-rigging. Are there any among you who will volunteer to man a boat’s crew with me to pick up the captain and his mates, who are struggling for their lives astern?”

As this question was put, a dead and ominous silence followed it, broken only by the continued thunder of the engine below, and the roaring of the tempest in the rigging above.

Herbert looked from face to face of the old and rugged sailors, and instantly read in the averted looks with which they turned

from one another, that every soul there thought the case as hopeless as himself.

"To every man who will volunteer," said Herbert, determined to try their courage to the last, "I myself will give fifty pounds the moment the ship arrives in port."

"No, no, it isn't the money, sir," said an old veteran, who had formerly served in an English man-of-war—"it isn't the money that any of the hands would be hanging back for; it would be quite pleasure and reward enough both, to save the life of a kind, good officer like our captain. But look at the sea, sir; if you have had anything to do with seafaring matters before now—and I presume you have,—look at the sea that's running alongside, sir, and you needn't ask anything else to tell whether the best boat that either this or any other ship ever had hanging at her quarter would live ten minutes."

"Talk about boats living," said another; "if we don't mind what we are about, and take care the steamer doesn't broach-to, as she seems pretty likely to do, depend upon it the boat we have under our feet won't have very long to live herself, to say nothing of such cockleshells as those that are hanging up abaft, more especially. Now that we've lost our officers, who is to command the ship, I should like to know? I don't believe there is one of us hands forward could work off the day's reckoning if we were to be hanged for it. What are we to do now without a captain? We're as good as lost already."

"Don't distress yourselves for want of a captain, my boys," cried Herbert, "I shall be happy to be of any use to you, as far as taking command of the ship goes, having passed the best part of my life as a naval officer, and got my promotion as lieutenant. As far as seamanship and navigation go, I shall be happy to render you all the service in my power while any danger remains; and then, as soon as fair weather returns to us, you may use your leisure in finding a commander more suited to your liking. You are quite right in saying that the present position of the ship is most precarious; nothing but danger threatens us on all sides; and, though it is no joke to take the command of the steamer at such a moment, yet without unanimity and discipline among us we are undoubtedly lost. As I said before, therefore, I will, if you wish it, act as your captain for the present; but I will only do so on one condition, and that is, that each individual of you renders the obedience due from himself and that you all combine to support my authority among one another."

"Agreed, agreed, sir," cried the old man-of-war's man, speaking for the rest; "I see you understand the rig of the thing; so now let us set to work, and try if we can't make the craft snug enough to weather out this gale."

"And first of all," said Herbert, "throw overboard a few spare spars for those poor fellows astern, and then pipe all hands to batten down hatches; and, above all things, remember to look

alive in all you do, and hold on like grim death, for on the next three hours must wholly depend the question whether any of us shall ever set foot upon the shore of old England again or not."

The last orders having been cheerfully obeyed, such loose spars as could be got at were thrown to leeward, less with the hope of their actually rescuing those ill-fated beings, who, swept overboard by the furious waters, had many if not all of them found by this time a final refuge from every storm, than as a sad satisfaction to those on board to achieve the little that was in their power. The carpenters were now summoned to direct and assist the seamen in battenning down the hatches, a process which may be made intelligible to the uninitiated by the explanation, that over all the open parts of the ship leading to the decks below were placed the wooden gratings, which are always made and fixed to these apertures when the ship first starts to sea, and over which were now laid large waterproof tarpaulins.

"That's right, my boys," said Herbert, as he saw the men cheerfully executing his orders; "begin to batten down over the engine-room, and nail as close as you can. Where are the sail-makers?"

"Here am I, sir—I'm a sailmaker," said one of the men.

"Before the hatches are finally closed," replied the acting captain, "go down to your sail-bin, and bring up the smallest storm-trysail you have. If we can contrive to persuade that to stand the breeze close-reefed, we shall be able to keep her to the wind a little better than we can now hope to manage with no steerage-wheel.

"Ay, ay, sir," said the sailmaker; "I won't be many minutes before I'm back on deck with it. If anything can stand the breeze, that will, for it's new out of the sailmaker's yard, and has never been bent yet."

"Here it comes, my boys; stand by for a sneezer," cried one of the look-out men forward, and once again, full on the bow, came another sea not much less powerful than its deadly predecessor, and, striking the steamer in full fury, a vast volume of dark-green, or rather dark-blue, water burst on the forecastle, and rushed straight aft, carrying with it all sorts of things and people, who seemed swept away in its resistless eddies like straws upon the surface of a mill-stream.

"Hold on hard!" cried Herbert, setting the example, and fixing himself as firmly as possible upon the nearest object.

But it was in vain; scarcely had the words left his lips, when he found himself hurled from the hold which he had attempted to take, and carried resistlessly aft amid a confused mass of ropes, and men, and other matters, striving vainly against a stream with which no one could contend.

Shouts of "Save me! save me!"—"We are sinking!"—"We are swamping!"—"We are broaching-to!" and other cries, exclamations, and appeals to the same purpose, sounded in our hero's

ears; and, for a time, so terrific was the roaring of the water over the thousand and one obstacles it encountered on the deck of the steamship, that not even the perpetual thunder of the steam-engine, as it clanked and clanked away in its ceaseless play, could be distinguished from the general uproar.

Not even the shrill whizzing of the paddle-wheels, as they whirled round and round in idle air, or struck suddenly and heavily on the head of some wave, fleecy in its wrath, as the steamer was beaten down into the bosom of the ocean, could be detected in the din.

Fortunately for Herbert, the waist of the *Atlantic* was some five feet deeper than her quarter-deck, which rose like a poop above it. Though swept from his hold with as much ease as might be an infant from the breast, it was only the abrupt rising of the quarter-deck that saved him from sharing the same fate as that of others of the crew, who, when the steamer at last rose, trembling from the struggle through which she had passed, to the summit of that sea which had so nearly mastered her, were seen tumbling over and over, the mere dark though living dots upon that dazzling surface which mocked while it adorned the fury of the ocean.

In the whole course of Herbert's nautical vicissitudes, he had never seen two such heavy seas shipped as those through which he had striven during the last ten minutes; and, certainly, it had never before been his lot to feel immediately in his own person the dreadful and irresistible power that mere water can possess.

Stunned, and almost senseless, as he staggered for support against the bulk-head that had saved him, he now was able to imagine in what manner the lives of the captain and his mates might have been sacrificed, how futile must have proved all their efforts to stand unsupported against the force that assailed them, and how the very fact of four men clinging to the wheel, which had required all their strength to hold, must have proved the very means, by their weight, of assisting the sea to tear it from its fastenings to the deck.

Though our hero himself had allowed no word of alarm to escape his lips, there was a moment when, as the cry arose, "We are swamping!—we are breaching-to!" stout of heart as he was, he felt an inward conviction that all was over. Only by degrees, as the water subsided from the deck, did this fear vanish; and, in proportion to the urgency of the steamer's imminent and increasing peril, his determined soul rose with the danger of the crisis, and he resolved that every effort should be made to overcome it, even though defeat and death should prove the sole reward.

"Never mind, my boys, never mind; once more to your post," cried he, shaking himself from the water that oozed out from every part of his dress, and rubbing the back of his head, which ached with the severity of the blow it had received, as if the very

skull would split. "Never mind that breaker, my boys, very little of the water got down below. Aft upon the quarter-deck, carpenters, and help to batten down the saloon skylights before they get beat in."

Knowing full well that one example is worth a hundred precepts, Herbert no sooner uttered this command than he sprang himself to execute it. Scarcely, however, had he gained the quarter-deck, when he beheld, issuing from the hatchway, Broadbrim and Wynn Powell, almost as completely drenched as himself.

"On my word," said the latter, "one would think we had undertaken to swim the *Atlantic* instead of to steam it. What is the meaning of all this water coming down into the saloon?"

Before Herbert could answer this question, the quaker was ready to pose him with another.

"On thine honour, as a gentleman, friend, is there the least hope that our vessel can live through the storm?" demanded Broadbrim.

"Yes," answered our hero; "there is the greatest hope of it, if you gentlemen down below will only show yourselves on deck, and by your presence here yield to these poor seamen that un-failing cordial in the hour of danger, the example of a determined courage."

"If that can help thee, friend Herbert, thee shalt not have to ask it twice," replied Broadbrim. "Speak but the word when we can truly assist thee, and I for one will be the first to enter the service, and I hope the last to shrink from it. So let me at once tell our worthy captain; or is he too busy, perchance, with his own duties, to attend to the frivolities of passengers. What dost thou mean, friend, by shaking thy head?"

"Alas!" said Herbert, "our gallant captain, while steering at the helm, with all his mates, was washed overboard not many minutes since, and I fear there is too much cause to believe that he is not only lost to us, but to all who esteem him. We threw him overboard a few spare spars, but whether he may be destined ever to reach the land again, heaven, in its mercy, only can decide. Seeing the necessity for some one acting vigorously for the benefit of us all, and that the crew, disheartened by his loss, were almost inclined to give the ship up in despair, I, in the absence of any other person, offered to take upon myself the command—an offer the seamen appeared willing to accept, promising to obey my commands. But if there is any gentleman on board whom the passengers think more competent to assist them, I for one shall be happy to act under his orders."

"For mercy's sake, don't propose it," quickly interposed Wynn Powell, "for my opinion is decidedly averse to any such folly as mooting the question. The folks below there are going on more like a set of demented creatures than aught besides; and, as to being fit to make any choice on such a subject, they hardly seem to know whether they stand upon their heads or their heels."

"It is too true, friend Herbert. It is too true," said the quaker, shaking his head; "and, alas! they have only too much cause for their dire perplexity. Act, therefore, in this matter, altogether as thou wilt: thou art a man accustomed to the sea, and none can come more opportunely to our assistance than thyself. Whatever thou seest fit, do—there is no danger so great as that of divided counsels, and I for one will uphold every order thou givest to the utmost of my power, right or wrong."

"And, by the Lord of Innisfail, I'll do the same," said the brigadier, appearing behind, agitating his sides, down which the salt water dripped plentifully, very much in the style of a Newfoundland dog emerging from the sea. "If there is any one," said the son of Mars, "who can help us out from the precious kettle of fish we are all boiling in, this is the man," and he slapped Herbert familiarly on the back—"though I very much fear, for my own part, that no skill of any kind can help us out of this dilemma."

"Leave that to me," said our hero; "since you are willing to put yourselves under my command, let us lose no more time in doing what may yet be available for the safety of the craft; and, first of all, let me give you this caution for your own sakes. This steamer is so sharp in the bows, and so heavily laden, and, more than all perhaps, is so long for the seas that she has to ride over, that every few minutes there comes across her such a flood of green water as I never saw shipped on board any other vessel in my life; and, if you don't take care, you will be washed overboard to a dead certainty. Once there, I know, for my part, no hope for you but to sink quietly into your graves: therefore, when you hear the cry of 'A sea coming!' lay yourselves flat on the deck, and catch hold of the firmest thing you can."

"Nothing else remains for you—and, when the sea is past, get up again and work like Trojans. Here come the carpenters with their tarpaulins, to batten down the hatchway. Seize each of you a hammer, and help them to nail all fast. Avast, there, my boys," turning to the men—"begin first with the cabin-skylights; and, in the mean time, brigadier, will you"—drawing him aside, and speaking in such an under-tone that the seamen could not hear the communication—"run down and bring me up the pistol you will find lying on the dressing-table, with a double-barrel. If discipline is to be enforced, we must at once be provided with the means of upholding it against all resistance."

"Ay, ay, my boy—a very proper suggestion. What would these poor benighted wretches have done, if we had not luckily been on board to take care of them?"

Full of doubt on this important point, the brigadier swiftly dived below and brought up the required weapon, which Herbert placing carefully within his bosom, buttoned his coat over it, and then proceeded with the duty he had undertaken to perform.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

"The sea was mountains rolling."

DIBDIN.

"Now then, my lads," cried Herbert, as soon as the men had completed the operation of battening down the hatchways, "come away forward, on the forecastle, all hands, and let us see if we can lighten the craft of some of her hamper. Stand by, forecastle men, to cut away the best bower anchor. Armourer, are you ready with your hammer to unrivet one of the clinches?"

"All ready."

"Away with it, then; out with the rivet."

A few short strokes were heard on the iron cable as this command was given, and closely following on the sound came the mourers' voice—

"Cable's unriveted sir—all ready now."

"Are you ready with the painter, forward?" demanded Herbert.

"All ready."

"Let go the anchor."

Away darted the end of the painter, at this last command, rough the hole cut for it in the ship's side. The large mass of on appeared to leap with joy from the steamer's starboard side, a jet of foam spirted upwards towards the foretop, while a sudden plunge was heard beneath the weather-bow; and, as the departed anchor shot swiftly through the tides below, the vessel, to which it had lately formed so important an appendage, seemed to spring onward to the next wave, as if she already felt relieved by the sacrifice that had been made of her gear.

"Well done, my boys," cried Herbert; "she springs along all the better for it already. Now over to the larboard side, and stand by to let the second bower go, too. Smith, look sharp with your work, and unrivet away before we get another of those infernal seas on board."

Clink! clink! was heard the hammer once again, and then a voice—

"All clear, sir."

A second command was given, and a second anchor speedily parted from the steamer, shooting into the liquid world below.

"That's true hearts of oak," cried Herbert, as every bound the vessel took convinced him more thoroughly how right was the course of proceeding he had adopted.

That's your sort, my hearties—see how the tidy craft thanked you for it. She goes a little more like a duck now than she did before. What other lumber have you got on the forecastle?—What's that I see yonder—a saluting gun?—Overboard with it."

"Axing your honour's pardon," said the old man-of-war's man, "if I might be so bold, don't you think it would be as well to keep that bit of a swivel on board, in case of our wanting to fire signals of distress?—it's the only thing we have got here that could help us at all to do that."

"Yes, my old tar, that's true; but whenever it comes to firing signals of distress in such a gale as this, depend upon it all's over with us. Though a thousand ships might hear us, not a single soul could ever come on board to render assistance to any one of us with such a sea running as this."

"Well, sir, that's very correct; I believe that's about the truth of it. Still, for old-fashion's sake, a man-of-war's man likes to part with his guns the last thing, as it may be; when once your guns go, it does indeed seem as if all was over with you, and that I fear is about our case."

"So over with it, this is no time for stopping to trifle; and, remember too, that we are not a man-of-war's-man, but simply a merchant-steamer. I am afraid there is nothing for it but heave the gun overboard. Off with it, my boys: lift his trunnions out of the carriage. Stay—wait a moment—he is too heavy for you. Clap a handspike into the muzzle; that's right; now you have it; to leeward with it—heave—heave again—once more—there he goes. Now heave him on the bulwark; now you have him—so—"

Another moment, and the long elegant piece of brass ordnance, yielding to the same fate that had already overtaken the anchors, was cast into the raging sea, and its sounding voice of brass became for ever hushed in the depths below.

After the gun followed several chests of heavy packages, which had not yet been struck below, but which remained upon the deck, considerably to the detriment of the duty carrying on.

In this moment of general danger, when it was so difficult to say whether any being on board might preserve his life through the duration of the tempest, it may readily be supposed that the ordinary respect of property was for a time annihilated: and, heedless to whom these goods might belong, or how valuable soever might be the articles contained in the packages, one and all were consigned with every possible expedition to the deep, which, like some insatiate monster, appeared ready to swallow up everything, nor cared how great were the sacrifices made to its fury.

Observing the good effect produced by thus lightening the steamer, Herbert now turned his attention to some means of repairing the damage inflicted on the means of steering. At present, it is true, the tiller remained, to a certain degree, locked;

it was, therefore, a great point once more to regain some command over the steerage of the ship, by devising some substitute for that apparatus which had been so fatally torn away.

Repairing aft, as soon as the vessel was as much lightened as the efforts of the crew could effect, Herbert now fixed a series of blocks to the sides of the ship on the poop, and by lengthening the tiller ropes, and conducting them to a safer spot than had been before used, it became once more practicable to guide the course of the *Atlantic*, without endangering the lives of those engaged in the operation. After several hours of the most unceasing exertion, it was evident to all on board, as well from the greater facility with which the steamer mounted the heavy seas, as from the infrequency of those deluges that had before almost threatened to swamp her, that hope might be once more entertained for their future voyage, if conducted with due care; and at last, towards the noon of the second day, after having only seen one solitary sail during the gale, and that at a great distance, the hatchways were, with much caution, unbattened, and those who had hitherto been confined below were allowed an opportunity of once more imbibing the fresh air on deck.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

“Art thou a spirit of health or goblin — ?”

Hamlet.

WHILE matters were thus progressing on the quarter-deck of the steamer, nothing short of a powerful imagination can do justice to the scene of terror and dismay that reigned below. The great majority of the passengers naturally believed that all was over; and, while some prayed and others gave way to their despair in wild bewailings, the more sensible sat by in quiet consideration of that awful summons which conducts man to his last trial.

A few of the more iron-nerved, aware that no efforts of their own could avert their fate, quietly laid themselves down, not to slumber, for that was beyond the pitch of even human expectation, but to meet, with calmness and composure, whatever shock was at hand.

Among these last was Mr. St. John; he, in his life, had gone through too much deep sorrow to feel any real dismay at that dissolution which must for ever set free the soul that had found it so trying to bear up against the ills that flesh is heir to.

At last, after several hours of this dread suspense, amid the most distracting racket overhead it was impossible to conceive, these appalling sounds seemed gradually to know some abatement, and at length was heard the sound of the hatches being unbattened; and as Mr. St. John lay in the privacy of his own state-room, he recognized the voice of the quaker announcing to the assembled moaners in the saloon the pleasing fact that there was yet room to hope for the ultimate triumph of the vessel over the infuriated gale, while, in the most glowing terms, neighbour Broadbrim proceeded, amid the most heartfelt expressions of gratitude, to give all the praise of this deliverance to some officer on deck, whose gallantry he recounted in terms of the highest commendation, and, as Mr. St. John readily perceived, not without good cause.

Prompt in all his actions, and not a little thankful in being spared the horror of seeing his child drowned before his eyes, the old gentleman sprang from his couch, strode into the saloon, and in a few seconds stood foremost in the group of the assembled passengers.

"Who is this gentleman to whom we are so much indebted?" he demanded of Broadbrim.

"Friend, he is but a passenger, like ourselves," repeated the latter.

"Then," said Mr. St. John, "the sooner we discharge ourselves of our duty towards him by returning him our thanks, the sooner we shall do justice to our own feelings. I will away to him at once, and publicly thank him on the quarter-deck."

"It is indeed well thought of, and well-deserved," replied Broadbrim. "I shall be exceedingly glad to point him out to that gratitude he has so richly earned."

"And I'll go."

"And I'll go too," cried another.

"We'll all go," cried the unanimous passengers; and in a body, following Mr. St. John, they all moved toward the deck above, to express to their deliverer the obligations which they owed him.

Scarcely had the two foremost individuals of the mission emerged from the companion-hatchway than Mr. St. John looked round to find this hero. Turning in the wrong direction, he eagerly exclaimed to Broadbrim:

"Where is he, sir? where is he to whom we all owe every thing?"

"Here he is, friend," replied the other.

"Where?" said Mr. St. John, still misdirecting his gaze.

The quaker placed his powerful arms round the other's waist, and, turning him suddenly towards the right quarter, the father

looked up to the deliverer of himself and child, and beheld, standing before him, his once accepted and then rejected son-in-law—OUR HERO!

It is a common expression among the uneducated, when they mean to typify surprise, to say that a fly might have knocked down the amazed gazer. The reverse of all this was produced here.

Mr. St. John gazed, and gazed, and gazed at the object before him, as if it were impossible to certify the fact, that he beheld Herbert standing on the deck; while, on the other hand, Herbert mutely hung down that head which had never quailed at the presence of danger, more like a conscious criminal than one who receives the thanks of a body of men, whose lives his gallantry had saved.

The singularity of the scene at once attracted universal attention.

"What, friend, hast thee met before?" exclaimed the quaker, who seemed wholly unable to define the cause of this mutual embarrassment, as well, good man, he might. Neither, however, answered the question. Broadbrim repeated it, accompanying the interrogatory with a wholesome shake of the waist of Mr. St. John, who still remained in his grasp.

Thus made to undergo so personal an appeal, Mr. St. John, at length got out:

"We have met before, I believe. It appears, sir," he continued, turning to our hero, "that you have placed the whole of us under great obligations for your exertions, to supply the loss of our captain, during the late storm; and I, with the rest, come gladly to pay you our sincere thanks."

Mr. St. John here made a low bow, and beckoned for the others to do so, which they did very cordially; while our hero, more occupied in thinking of the strange interview just past with his once-proposed father-in-law, could only return, in a hurried manner, his broken thanks, for the kind appreciation they seemed to entertain of his services; and scarcely knowing whether to be pleased or not with Mr. St. John's reception of himself he hastened below to his cabin.

CHAPTER XL.

“Whisper low.

The prey we seek we'll soon ensnare.”

Masaniello.

UP to this moment those distressing events which had called upon Herbert to assume the command of the important steamer, on board which he had entered an unknown and unnoticed passenger only a few hours before, the imminent peril which had on all hands surrounded him and those he held most dear, the fierce excitement of battling against a cruel destiny, threatening his life, and, more than all, the deep excitement produced by the necessity of having every energy awake, and knowing that any relaxation on his part would be followed by the penalty of death to all on board—these various feelings, it may well be imagined, had, for a time, completely banished every recollection of that mutiny which the storm in a manner swallowed up.

Nor will it appear surprising that so frightful a peril could thus for a time have entirely passed from his mind, for the very circumstances which surrounded it conveyed an absolute promise of safety in the fears to which it necessarily gave rise in the minds of the conspirators. No man who had beheld the frightful condition of the *Atlantic* for the last twenty-four hours could have deemed it even practicable that any portion of the steamer's passengers or crew, however abandoned in character, or hardened in villany, could contemplate a struggle for life and death for the mere possession of property, which the next moment might see entombed with themselves in the bosom of the raging waters. It is true that, with the departure of this pressing peril, the remembrance of the other might have arisen; but Herbert's mind was naturally too filled with emotions of the warmest gratitude, if not of exultation, at the recent escape of the steamer under his exertions, not to enjoy with avidity the temporary calm that appeared to present itself; once more Hope began to whisper, in the strongest terms of future joys, and that peaceable possession of *Nautila*, which was now the boon he most desired in life.

“Surely,” muttered Herbert, “after all that is past, when the old man comes to reflect that under Providence he owes the lives of both himself and child to me, he will be too just any longer to urge against me the circumstances under which our acquaintances first commenced. Our passage may be prolonged to England for

some time farther than I anticipated ; but that accomplished, the heaviest of my trials, I trust, are over, and then I see before me a long vista of undoubted happiness."

As Herbert said this, he descended from the quarter-deck, where he was keeping watch, and where he had placed at the helm one of the oldest seamen he could find on board, and sauntered forward toward the engine-room, with the view of watching how the machinery worked after the terrific ordeal through which it had passed ; but, though he gazed down at the bright and complicated works reflecting back the ruddy fire from beneath the boiler, his mind still wandered on those pleasing anticipations of the future, to which we have just alluded.

The hour was now somewhat past two in the morning of the third whole day at sea ; exhausted by all they had previously undergone, passengers and crew had all availed themselves of the first night of security, to recruit, by sleep, the heavy demands previously made on their energies ; all hands, except the watch on deck, were below in their hammocks ; and, saving the look-out man on the weather-bow, the seaman placed at the wheel, the men engaged in the engine-room, and Herbert himself, all eyes appeared sealed by repose. Even the watch on deck had gathered themselves into various nooks and corners, to forget the troubles and dangers "in tired Nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep." The winds still sung solemnly through the rigging of the vessel ; and the heavy seas, though subsiding rapidly from their former fearful contention, still ran very high, and caused the steamer to roll heavily from crest to hollow, and from trough to crest again ; the engine, every now and then, labouring oppressively beneath the quantity of fluid which, at one moment, quite buried the paddles, and the steamer then springing madly onward for a few seconds, as some chance lift, for a brief period, left both wheels free. To most persons who had only frequented vessels of this class in smooth water, even the present position of the *Atlantic* would have seemed perilous and dreadful in the last degree ; but to Herbert, who remembered the aspect and condition of the ship when he first assumed its command, the prospects and state of the vessel at this moment appeared to be security itself : fondly he felicitated himself on this point.

"All is right now," muttered he, as he gazed down into the engine-room ; "we shall soon be home, and she will then be mine."

In an instant a sudden panic seemed to strike to his heart, and to crush every expectation he had formed. His eyes opened to the fullest extent ; his head seemed to be suddenly riveted in an attitude of intense expectation, as if listening to some horrible denouncement of all his future plans ; and the countenance, that but a few moments before had been beaming with anticipated happiness, and glowing in the ruddy firelight, now seemed to grow panic-stricken with horror, and pale almost as death could have

made it. What was the cause of this sudden change? A few words, seemingly unimportant in themselves, had at once knelled the doom of all his fondest hopes.

"The deed must be done to-night!" he heard some one say, in a low-toned voice, so low as almost to approach a whisper.

"The deed must be done to-night!" What was there in that particular phrase so terrible as to blanch the cheek, that the strongest fury of the gale had left untouched. Alas! it was not the mere expression, but the accent of the voice, that struck so deep a chill in the heart of Herbert. The deed might be any deed of the most simple kind; but when he detected those tones, he knew them to be the same which he had before heard, when seated on the paddle-box, and was perfectly convinced on the instant that the deed then alluded to was no other than the villanous project of seizing the ship, which he had already partly heard discussed before the gale came on. The voices to which he now listened came direct from the little recess formed by the foremost waist-cabin to leeward; and the wind, eddying from there, bore towards him the conversation that was used. Enemies as they were, it was with considerable reluctance that he could persuade himself to listen to their words; but the safety of all he held dear so depended upon this point, it certainly would have been most cruel in him to have allowed justice to have been defeated by any overstrained delicacy. This he felt to be the proper view of the case, and remaining still in the same spot, any doubt that he might have entertained as to the intentions of the talkers was speedily dissipated.

"I tell you," said the first speaker, "we should be nothing better than a couple of fools to delay the opportunity beyond to-night. Here we have a good spanking breeze—not so much sea on, after all—and the best part of the passengers, the only persons who could make any resistance worth talking about, are all plunged in so sound a sleep after their exertions, we might finish them with as much ease as I could slice a boiled carrot. No, no; there will be no time like the present, depend upon it, ever again. I have spoken to——"

Here followed some names which Herbert could not catch.

"They all agree with me that to-night is the time. We should all repent delay when too late; besides, we are all prepared and ready for the matter; and remember this, if we take them unprepared, we shall have quite enough hands to do the job without any one of us losing the number of his mess; whereas, if we delay, some scent of it may get wind, and we may then have to fight it out. That acting captain who so suddenly skipped into the skipper's shoes is a likely lad, depend upon it, to give us some trouble, if he should know of the matter; and an unlucky shot may take off you or I for no purpose, when we might be snugly enjoying ourselves without any risk, if we choose to act at once; besides, hang it, there's always danger, more or less, in putting off till to-morrow

what might be done to-night. There's always some confounded chance or other in this world turns up to derange a chap's plans, just when he least expects it."

"Why, yes, you are right enough there; but there's one thing you seem to forget, that, although the other fellows are all fast asleep hard enough, there's that acting skipper of ours, as you call him, stumping about up there. He'll be sure to be wide awake at our first move. How shall we get rid of him?"

Here Herbert also felt some little interest in the question, since it was quite clear he was that acting skipper to whom the conspirators had so gently alluded. It may therefore be supposed he did wait with no little anxiety to hear what disposition was contemplated in his favour.

"You see," continued the last speaker, after a pause, "if we were to use firearms, that would be sure to rouse up the whole saloon-full of passengers. That would never do. If we were to run him through, or crack his skull with a cleaver or crowbar, or anything of that sort, unless we could get him at a disadvantage, and do the thing at once, he would be sure to sing out, and that would bring upon us that roaring Irish devil of a major, whom he has converted from a major of rides into a first lieutenant; and if we were to slip aft, two or three of us, and try to pinion him and chuck him overboard, the helmsman would be sure to start forward and give us a tussle, for there are several milk-hearted devils among the crew that have chosen to take a fancy to him, because he stood out so stiffly during the gale. Depend upon it, we had much better wait till to-morrow night, when it will be Spoony's watch on deck; and this fellow sound asleep in his hammock, we shall have little difficulty then in settling his hash any how."

"No, no; I tell you it won't do to delay it. I've been in these matters before, and I know, if you put them off, there is some fellow sure to split. There is some difficulty, as you say, in getting rid of this cursed thief!"

"I have it!" interrupted the other. "I'll tell you how we'll manage it: let's pretend that there's something the matter with the engine, get him forward to look at it there before the piston. I'll have the grating removed, as if to show it more clearly, and while he is straining his neck over to set it to rights—for I fancy he thinks he can mend everything—you give him a push behind, as if accidentally; I'll pretend to try and save him as he falls, and give him another. Let him once get a pound from that crank, and he'll be as dead as a knit, and will never trouble any of us. Then trust me to sing out to Blue Blazes to stop the engine, and I will run down to it myself; but you may take your oath there will be right little stoppage of the engine for him until every bone in his body is as fine that you might make sausage-meat of the whole of it."

"That will do, Jim—that will do!" returned the other.

"And for more reasons than one," rejoined the first speaker.

"Now, the sooner we bring it to bear the better."

We have already seen that Herbert was a man of iron nerves ; but when he heard this atrocious proposal made for his destruction, he involuntarily moved aside from where he stood gazing at that which these wretches so coolly proposed to make the instrument of his death, and placing one hand firmly on part of the framework that formed the engine skylight, faced gradually round towards that point where he knew the mutineers were seated, for some moments almost questioning to himself whether they might not have seen him listening, and framed this conversation merely to practise on what they might consider to be the fears of an eaves-dropper.

But, on the next moment, he had at once discarded this supposition as one altogether too favourable to these villains ; for, even supposing that they had seen him before their present conversation, he was quite certain they had not done so when he overheard their former converse on the paddle-box. Moreover, that on which they talked was too pertinent ; when money and thieving are in the case, jokes are rarely indulged.

No, it was but too certain that all they now proposed it was the firm intention of these wretches if possible to execute. It only remained to be seen, therefore, whether he could frustrate their knavery, or they could cause their villany to triumph over the unhappy passengers and crew, who were now, as it were, under his protection ; at any rate, he had at last the fullest notice of their intentions, and he was determined to contest and fight them to the latest gasp.

The conference, however, was not yet ended ; and, though he longed to get back to the cabin and arrange matters for the fullest defence, he was still more solicitous to get away without attracting their attention ; and, between his anxiety to do this, and his wish to learn what further steps they were prepared to take, he still lingered for a few minutes.

"I tell you what," said the first speaker, who was Boston Bill, "that plan of yours with the engine was very good as regards the chief we want to get rid of ; but when so much depends on having our ship in quick moving trim, I should be loth to run the risk of damaging the engine by throwing that fellow down into it. When we were getting rid of the lumber of his carcase, we might as well chuck him overboard at once, and that would avoid all risk, and be more certain to make less row ; it's done in a minute, too. There's one of our men will have to be look-out from the bow in the course of half an hour ; he's a regular out-and-out one ; I'll get him to sing out 'a light close on board.' We'll 'tice forward that bumptious fellow on deck, and all swear we can see it ; get him within a foot or two fronting the bowsprit, then cant him overboard like a bag of sand. You eye the one or two others that I have named. We'll go down the cabin ; and, then, remember, not a man among them sees the sun rise to-morrow. Don't

frighten the women more than you can help, because they may be useful by-and-by; but, as for the other fellows, they must all walk off hand. One or two of them, such as the major, and those chaps likely to fight, we must get rid of how we can, though, wherever rougher work is to be helped, I prefer giving them the big swimming-bath, with a shot or two tied to their heels, to any other mode of getting rid of supernumeraries; it's a cleaner way of doing business, to say nothing of the fun at seeing what wry faces the devils make before they can rightly screw their minds up to salt-water point. You never did see a regular walk-plank, did you?"

"No," said the other, "I can't say I ever did."

"Lord!" said Boston Bill, "you almost split yourself with laughing when you come too see how a pack of fellows, who have lived on the fat of the land till they love to imagine they never can have anything else—how fellows of this kidney, I say, seem quite taken back when they are told to walk their chalks by the deep nine, and cut their sticks into the old herring-pond; how they wring their hands, and blubber away, and talk of their wives and children, whether they have got any or no; say the prayers that they haven't thought of for many a day before, and kneel before you for what they call your mercy, though in all their lives up to that time they never showed any to any creature they ever had anything to do with. Oh, man! it would do your heart good—you who have known what it is before now to bear the buffetings of those proud, haughty worms, who call themselves the rich and wealthy of the world, to see them, as I have seen them, down upon their marrow-bones upon the bare deck, imploring half an hour's life, a quarter of an hour's—ay, a few minutes, with as much energy as if they were asking for the whole world."

"And did you give it?" said the other.

"Give it them!" repeated the first speaker; "ay, I about as much gave it them as they would have given me a five-pound note a few months before, if I had gone into one of their houses—their palaces I should rather say—and asked them for it. Shall I tell you what one fellow I well remember asked me once—for five minutes to make his peace with heaven."

"Did he?"

"Yes; and what do you think my answer was?—'What,' said I, 'you scoundrel, do you think that I, having you for my prisoner, would give you an opportunity of gaining that which I have long ceased to hope for myself!' In another instant the point of my cutlass was tickling his backbone, and he jumped like a flying-fish into the blue sea, with a couple of eighteen-pounders to help him to get to the bottom of it."

"Then, I suppose, you've seen a good deal of this sort of thing in your time."

"More than I could call to mind, if I tried ever so much. The moment you once begin to say stop to another man's life-blood,

unless it be in a regular stand-up fight, you soon cease to hold any account of it, and it soon grows to be as cheap in your eyes as any other thing under heaven."

"And where did you first begin this sort of business?"

"In a slaver; that's the place to make a fellow care for neither man nor devil. The first fellow I sailed with certainly was one of the most malicious devils I ever met with. He used to take a pleasure after dinner in ordering up them niggers as wasn't in a healthy state, nor likely to see the voyage out, on purpose for a little diversion like, make bets with me and the mate as to which would be likely to jump farthest in going overboard. Why, what sort of value can a man set upon a score or two of human lives, more or less, after passing a few of his years in seeing that sort of fun?"

"Not much, certainly; but never having done that, you see, myself, I confess I don't much like beginning now."

"Ha, I thought, after all, that that was the bottom of your delay, but that little delicacy of yours, Yankee, you'll find, will all go off the moment your hand's in, and as soon as you help me to give that acting captain of ours his last swim—for, if we push him over the bows, the paddle-wheel will terrible soon finish him, and that once done, you'll find yourself quite comfortable for the rest of the night's work; and as to starting at a life or two, why, what a fool you are! Wasn't this the very purpose for which we embarked on board as passengers; and isn't it much better to knock a few of these fellows out of their lives, in which they have had the good things of this life to themselves quite long enough, than go on leading the poverty-stricken, miserable existence we do, while we have heads to plan, and hearts to seize on what will make us princes for the rest of our days?"

"Why, yes, there's truth in that, to be sure."

"Ay, to be sure there is! so pluck your heart up, and, by the way, keep your eye upon Rannbewdly. I'm not altogether without some notion, that if he could see his way, he'd split upon us, and if I could once make that out clearly, the faint-hearted vagabond, I'd make my bowie knife and his heart's blood acquainted before we were a quarter of an hour older."

The tone in which this was said convinced Herbert that though the menace was directed to Rannbewdly, the person for whom it was really breathed was the worthy colleague whom the speaker was addressing; nor is it improbable that Yankee, as he was called, saw it in the same light, since he remained marvellous reserved in answer to this exposition of his intentions on the part of Boston Bill.

"And so," playfully added the latter, with a view of drawing off his attention from an unpleasant subject, "you never took a man's life on the sea yet?"

Something like a smothered sigh answered to this query, followed by the short deep monosyllable, "No."

"Why, what a greenhorn you must be then! Come, we've gossiped here long enough; follow me, and in half an hour you shall be a wiser man, but remember——"

But for the matter that Boston Bill desired the other to hold in such strict memorial, Herbert did not care to remain.

CHAPTER XLI.

"Woman, 'tis thine to cleanse his heart
From every base, unholy part;
His friend, protector, guide, to be,
And win him back the heaven he forfeited for thee."

THERE are moments when even the bravest hearts despair, and then, singularly enough, is the moment when some otherwise soft and gentle nature, if at hand to prompt endurance and perseverance, is able by this passive assistance to render most material aid; and this is a point at which woman, in a few moments, renders to man an ample reward and return for a life of care, protection, and defence; this, also, is the reason why enterprises, that combine the skill of more heads than one, so often thrive, where a solitary command would meet with failure, less by the intrinsic merit of any suggestion made, than by the simple encouragement given by a bosom full of hope to one where that vital flame is burning faint and low.

When Herbert heard that the conspirators were moving away from the spot where they had been so long consulting, he glided along the deck as swiftly and as rapidly as he could till he reached the funnel, and, darting noiselessly behind it, peeped forward and watched the two plotters of his death descend into the fore cabin. Having once traced them under cover, he instantly turned round towards the quarter-deck, to pursue the only steps that remained available to him for the defeat of the horrible outrage he now knew to be in contemplation. During the whole of the lengthened tale of execrable villany which he had so providentially overheard, he had listened, as may be imagined, with a degree of nervous excitement, and when the tension of the moment was past, the natural depression ensued; involuntarily wringing his hands, as he

walked towards the quarter-deck, he exclaimed, with a voice loud enough to be heard,—

“Father of mercy, after all we have gone through, is it not too dreadful to think that such frightful trials still await poor *Nautila*!”

He had gained the head of the short ladder leading from the gangway to the quarter-deck as he uttered these words, looking down all the while as if he expected to see written beneath his feet the most full and ample instructions for all conduct necessary to be pursued on the occasion; had he, however, actually seen his orders written in characters of burning fire, he could not have been more, scarcely indeed so much, surprised as he now was, on looking up to behold *Nautila* herself, fully dressed and waiting to receive him. Agitated and distressed as his mind at that moment was, he at first conceived this appearance to be some cheat of the senses, some illusion of the sight, or, for anything he knew, a phantom, though, up to this moment, he had been a most professed disbeliever in any appearance of the sort. Between doubt and surprise he was speechless, but not so his mistress. As he came to a pause, *Nautila* stretched out both her hands, and with a smile that appeared to Herbert to carry in its expressive meaning a wondrous participation in his present sorrows, and a full assurance that he would yet live to fight his way out of them, she at once terminated all question as to the reality of her material appearance, by addressing him in those silver tones which Herbert had so long loved to hear, and with that which appeared to him almost a spirit of prophecy.

“Dearest Herbert, I knew it was so: I knew that some fresh and terrible calamity impended over you, and I have come to share it. Do not speak, but hear me,” she added, bending so that the moon’s light failed to make visible the rising blush upon her cheek, continuing to speak in a voice so low that it could only reach the ear for which it was intended. “I love my father, and would give my life for him at any moment, and in everything but this one point will obey him to the letter; but, after all you have suffered and endured for my sake, whatever danger threatens I will be at your side.”

“Go below, love; go below, replied Herbert, endeavouring to conceal his emotion; “what can make you imagine that any danger threatens me now?”

“Do you not know that it is one of the melancholy afflictions of my lot that I often dream of those ills that overtake myself and friends in actual life? The whole of this night I have seen you before me, again and again, in a thousand shapes of horror. Now I had fancied you had fallen overboard; then the horrid scene changed, and I saw you tumbling headlong upon the horrid engine.”

“*Nautila*!” exclaimed Herbert, in a tone of solemnity, if not of horror, “you are not jesting with me?”

"On my word I am not."

"And you have but this instant come on deck from your cabin?"

"But this moment. Again and again I woke, but still the same frightful dream pursued me, till at length, unable to restrain myself any longer, I resolved to know the worst, and if any danger threatened you, to share it. I hastily left my cabin for the deck, and scarcely had I gained this spot, when I heard you just now give utterance to some sudden exclamation, from which I feel convinced that some imminent peril is at hand. What is it? Speak, I implore you! Your dreadful silence makes it seem a thousand-fold more terrible. What have I done—am I not worthy of your confidence?"

"Yes, Nautila, indeed, indeed you are, and you shall have it all. A worse calamity impends upon us now than even when the storm was at its height. A plot is laid among some scoundrels who appear to have obtained information relative to your father's embarkation of treasure; under the pretence of being passengers for England, they have got on board the steamer, in the fore cabin; and I have just overheard their plan, to surprise all the male passengers, and, having got rid of them, to seize the ship and money, and make for some distant port, where they fancy they can securely enjoy the fruits of their villany."

"And is that all, Herbert?" said Nautila, smiling.

"What would you have more? What could the wretches even themselves desire further that they may not soon be in a position to gain?"

"Why, this material point—the men's hands pinioned behind them, and women's tongues compelled to silence—Thank Heaven! oh, thank Heaven! If this be all that threatens you, I breathe once more. Rejoice, dearest Herbert, that you have stumbled thus upon their counsels; in doing this, you have already half won the victory."

"We are not within hearing of any one, are we?" looking round for the helmsman.

"No," she continued. "Now, tell me what time have we to prepare for the attack?"

"About twenty minutes; from that to half an hour."

"It is ample, dearest," said the noble girl. "When my father once had occasion to live among the Indian tribes, we learnt to hold ten minutes' warning of an attack a perfect age of preparation."

"But, alas, Nautila, what is the use of warning without the means to avail ourselves of it? You forget we are not now in a man-of-war, where muskets could be had for arming; we shall scarcely find a weapon below in the saloon, but a few double-barrelled guns."

"Never were you further from the truth, Herbert; my father alone, has five of his favourite Indian rifles at this moment on

board; and as for ammunition, never again, dearest, laugh at any of his whimsicalities; he has enough powder and ball in his cabin for a whole winter's sport in our own dear forests."

"How fortunate! Heaven has sent you to me, Nautila, in the very depth of my distress, and never yet was dearer angel chosen," whispered the devoted lover, unable, even in that moment of imminent peril, to forbear lingering slightly over his mistress's exquisite hand, and pressing it again and again to his lips. "Walk with me slowly back to the companion, and then, as soon as you are fairly out of sight from any one on deck who may now be watching us, fly to your father's cabin; tell him what has happened: bid him run instantly to the cot of the brigadier, and all the other gentlemen; let him beg them to arm themselves with all possible expedition; and when they have loaded all your father's rifles, and any other weapons they may possess, do you come back to me, and bring under your shawl one of your father's favourite six-barrelled pistols, with a bayonet, if he happens to have them with him."

"He has, I know he has; you shall have one in your hand before three minutes are past. I scorn, dearest Herbert, to bid you know no fear—that never could enter into a breast like yours; and, as for support, dream not it shall be wanting; and, when every other arm is laid low in your defence, this one is still ready to bleed for you to the death. You know," she added, playfully, "I have a steady eye for a rifle: and my hand will not become more faltering in its nerve, because it supports that cause which is my father's and your own."

As she said this, she just touched his lips with her rosy fingers, walked slowly from him to the companion-hatchway, and, curtsying twice with the utmost deliberation, and waving her white handkerchief towards him in a way that must have convinced any lurking spy, if such were near, that the subject of their late conversation was one of the most trivial importance and badinage, she gradually disappeared beneath the covering of the hatchway, leaving Herbert transfixed to the deck, in utter doubt as to which he loved and prized the most—the surpassing loveliness of her person, her winning, gentle, fascinating manners, or the innate excellence and decisive energy of her mind, the high, daring, and inspirited courage of which had, in a few minutes' conversation, wrought such a revolution in his own.

"With such a woman at his side," muttered our hero, "who would not dare a thousand deaths? ay, though the grisly king of terrors in person led them on! Nothing beneath the canopy of heaven could daunt him but a sense of wrong, and that, great God, I thank thee," looking up to the deep blue vault above him, "if I this night render up my last account, that at least will be wanting in the scale to weigh me down!"

CHAPTER XLII.

"And long debate they how to take the field."

JARNONT.

By adopting the precautions described in the last chapter, of sending Nautila below to rouse the sleepers, instead of going himself, this additional advantage was gained; it was no longer necessary for Herbert to quit the deck himself, and thus give any information to the mutineers that their intentions had been discovered. A question now arose how he should first meet their attack. Would it be sufficient to act on the belief of their plans already overheard, or ought he to venture forward, and trust himself so far in their power as to approach the bow of the ship? Just at this moment, while he was yet deliberating what step he should take, a clear, distinct cry—"Sail on the lee-bow"—was heard.

"Ah," quoth our hero, "the rascals are even then before their time. I have a good mind to go forward and see whether I am right in my suspicions, and if that scoundrel, Master Boston Bill, is really there—and yet it seems an absurd tempting of one's fate to doubt, after what I heard, that their intentions really are as criminal as the words of that wretch imported. I don't like to venture on the fearful step of taking men's lives upon mere suspicion—that is hardly justice; on the other hand, it is still less so to risk the lives of all the passengers on board, by extending to these scoundrels an over-minute degree of consideration. How provoking that I have not one of those glorious pistols from below! I might then have an opportunity of proving if I am right or not, and at once doing summary justice on Master Bill of Boston, without whom, as their leader, I very much doubt whether the other fellows would not prove too weak to act in the matter at all. Still, without arms, I confess, I think it would be bad generalship to venture forward, knowing what I do of the plans and intentions of that consummate villain; though I'll wait a little, and see what course they take."

"Sail on the lee-bow," repeated the same voice that Herbert had before heard, with this addition, "close aboard."

Herbert walked to the lee-side of the quarter-deck, and, pretending to look out, as if in search of this said vessel, replied, "How does she bear? I can't see her."

"Almost right ahead, sir; you can't see her from the quarter-deck; you had better come forward here in the bows, sir."

"Stuff man!" replied Herbert. "Why don't you say whether you want the helm put starboard or port and have done with it?"

"I can't tell which is best," roared back the look out; "she shows no light, sir. Quick! quick! come forward, sir, or we shall be right aboard her in three minutes."

"This is a clear case," muttered Herbert, to himself; "what shall I pretend to think?—Oh, I have it."

Walking over to the starboard-gangway, Herbert pretended to examine the sea with his night-glass, but, while doing so, a dead silence pervaded the decks of the steamship, as far as any motion of human life was concerned; nothing was heard but the continued heavy plunging of the engine, and the rushing of the water, as the paddles dashed furiously through the sea. At this moment, Herbert distinctly heard the voice of Boston Bill, exclaiming—

"Hang me if he doesn't smell a rat. You engage his attention forward here, while I go aft, and finish him myself. It will never do to hang fire now."

And already Herbert heard the steps of the ruthless ruffian coming, stealing gently along the deck below.

"Oh for one good chance with that favourite pistol!" muttered Herbert, as, in the bitterness of that moment of impending death, he watched the tall and powerful form of his intended assassin moving quietly forward in the dusky shadows of the night, our hero's ear intently listening, during all the time, for Nautila's footstep upon the cabin companion-ladder; still it came not. Alas, poor Nautila! had you known how nearly your lover's sands were at that moment threatened with a final close, it would have increased your perplexity, and that, indeed, would have been unnecessary. When Nautila entered her father's cabin she found, at the very moment that he most needed a light, that necessary adjunct to their defence had gone out. While explaining to her parent the danger in which they all stood, she continued to feel in the dark for the pistol her lover desired to possess, and which she herself had so recently seen. Her father had, however, in the day, it seems, placed it away so very securely, that he could not now direct his child where to find it. She next endeavoured, with some agitation it may be supposed, to detect the phosphorus matches; but—as is invariably the case whenever any matters of this sort are required—the phosphorus-box had, some two hours previously, rolled off the table into a corner of the cabin; they therefore were not to be discovered; and the rascals scorned to speak, for, from the days of Guy Faux downwards, matches and conspirators have always entertained a wondrous sympathy for each other.

Nautila tried as long as she could to bear up under this complication of mischances; but she knew too well that every moment

which flew by might bear with it the life of some person she valued or held dear. When, however, she heard on deck voices, the distinct pronunciation of which she could not catch, she could restrain her agitations no longer, and, in her wild endeavours to stumble on the weapons she sought, she, as a matter of course, rendered the confusion of the cabin ten times more confounded, and finally fearing that the plotters without the saloon had some confederate within, that had caused the pistols to be extracted, she flew, in an agony of apprehension, to her own berth, there to procure a light. In the mean time, Herbert, whose equanimity was by no means strengthened by the continued delay in bringing him the assistance he now required, as a last alternative, to delay the deadly struggle that was approaching, cried out to Boston Bill,—

“Who is that going along the waist there?”

He, however, of Boston, disdained to make any reply to this inquiry, or take the slightest notice of it, farther than to expedite his steps considerably towards the spot where Herbert stood, “Bill” feeling, as he did so, in his bosom, to ascertain that the haft or handle of his large bowie-knife was ready for performing the delicate operation, which its owner termed slitting the wizzard of the acting captain.

And here, perhaps, in order that our readers may exactly understand the position in which our hero was placed, we may as well describe to those who are unacquainted with its formation what a bowie-knife really is. Numbers of them are manufactured at Sheffield and Birmingham, and shipped out to the American market, where it is melancholy to add that a large sale exists for these brutal and unmanly weapons. The handle is formed of buck-horn, or some other hard, enduring substance, and the blade is of the finest polished steel, wrought almost to the sharpness of a razor, and in shape like an enormous carving-knife, with this exception, that the back of it, half way down, is equally as sharp as the front, and the hand is protected by a cross-bar, which thus gives the weapon all the power of a dagger, with all the handiness that belongs to the more domestic knife. It is, moreover, spear-pointed; and scarcely on any part of the human trunk can a blow be inflicted with this frightful weapon that is not almost sure to be the death of the party enduring it. It is always carried in a long sheath, and is, we believe, mostly used in the southern parts of the Union, being carried about at balls, and all the amusements and meetings common in society, where it is the constant instrument of death and bloodshed, and which, if found upon the person of any one in England, would very properly stamp him as a desperado of the most suspicious kind.

Herbert well knew what the weapon was, and what was the result likely to ensue from being struck by it; he also was aware, from having overheard the conversation of the slaver, that it was

a weapon which that gentleman very consistently carried and patronized. He could also, in the moonlight, plainly perceive "Bill" putting his hand into his bosom; and Herbert rightly conceived it could only be for the purpose of ascertaining that his murderous weapon was safe.

CHAPTER XLIII.

"*Sir Ben.* Then, madam, they began to fight with swords.

"*Crabtree.* With pistols, nephew, pistols: I have it from undoubted authority!"

School for Scandal.

ALTHOUGH when first menaced from a distance by his present danger, Herbert could not help feeling, and acutely too, the separation which it threatened from Nautila, yet, now that the peril had come to hand, his spirit rose with the emergency, and his soul became as calm and tranquil as if nothing threatened to disturb his joys. Grasping his telescope firmly, he once more addressed the ringleader, with a voice and manner that seemed wholly unsuspecting of any evil being threatened him.

"I say, there, you Boston Bill, why the devil don't you answer when you are called? Run forward, that's a good fellow, and bring aft that stupid look-out man; he must surely be drunk or foolish, one or both!"

But Boston Bill had been in deadly affrays too often to be thus put off his guard.

"Oh, sir! you are speaking to me, are you?" replied Bill, at once quickening his pace, stepping into the moonlight, and advancing rapidly towards the quarter-deck. "The look-out man forward, sir, is perfectly sober. I'll just come up beside you; I think I can show you where the sail is that he sees."

"Do as I order you this instant, sir! Go forward and bring him aft," sternly cried Herbert, determined to struggle to the last for all the time he could possibly gain.

"Yes, sir, here I come!" cried the slaver, springing with one foot on the quarter-deck ladder, and pretending to have misunderstood the order.

Herbert waited for no more. In another instant the man's

face was just appearing above the quarter-deck. Quick as lightning, around Herbert's head swung the heavy night-glass which he held in his hand, and down it came, crashing with its full weight upon the left temple of Boston Bill. Thick as nature had certainly made the skull of this worthy, still the *coup-de-main* of his young foe took him by considerable surprise. Uttering a fearful imprecation, "Bill" passed his left hand over the wounded spot, so as to dash the blood out of his eyes, and in the next instant his right hand was brandishing aloft the fearful weapon we have attempted to describe. Stunned as he was for a moment, he still saw the great advantage which he had in the comparatively feeble weapon of defence wielded by his antagonist. A sort of conviction possessed him that intelligence of his plot must have been gained by Herbert, and though he knew not how, this seemed convincing of the inutility of any further delay or disguise. Turning his head towards the bow, he shouted,—

"Now's your time, my boys, and the day's your own!"

At this signal a number of his brother scoundrels, who had been lying in wait, all jumped up from their places of concealment, and rushed aft toward the quarter-deck.

"Help! help! Helmsman, arm yourself with a handspike, or we shall all be murdered!" cried Herbert.

But without looking round to see if the man whom he summoned to his assistance responded faithfully to his cry, he at the same time, stamped vehemently on the quarter-deck, as he stood at the head of the ladder leading below.

In the mean time, Boston Bill no sooner heard the tramp of his confederates' feet behind him, than, blinded by rage and forgetting that a little delay would have made him perfectly sure of success, he once more dashed forward at Herbert, aiming at him a terrific blow with the bowie-knife, which, had it taken effect, as was intended, in the neighbourhood of the heart, must then and for ever have closed the battles of our hero. Herbert, however, saw the knife coming, and, aware that he had damaged the vision of his opponent by the blow across the nose with his night-glass, now stepped nimbly on one side, caught the ruffian's wrist upon his telescope, and, as Boston Bill attempted to gain a footing on the quarter-deck, the young lieutenant, who was an admirable wrestler, rapidly threw out his foot and struck the slaver a sharp quick stroke on the inside of his ankle. The effect was instantaneous: down came the villain to the deck with a sound like that which a falling mammoth might have occasioned; and before any of his companions could rush to his rescue, Herbert, putting his whole strength into the effort, discharged the full weight of his night-glass once more upon the ruffian's skull. The deep groan that broke from the slaver as he lay there, and received this richly-merited payment of his execrable villany, went, it must be confessed, like music to the heart of his opponent, while the large, thick field-glass, crashed by the force of the blow, splintered into a

thousand fragments, and sprung over the deck sparkling in the moonlight.

"Down with him! down with the villain!" shouted the other mutineers, as they saw their leader fall, and rushing forward to his support; but Herbert, unarmed as he was, felt that the post of honour was in his keeping, and that he would rather die defending the quarter-deck ladder, than procure his safety by opening the slightest opportunity to these men to gain the companion-hatchway, and rush down to execute their proposed butchery upon the defenceless tenants of the saloon, among whom were Nautila and her father. Most of his assailants were armed, like the one who had just fallen, with long knives, but fortunately were unable to come immediately to close quarters; and, had Herbert continued to possess even the poor apology for arms which he wielded in his late encounter, he might still have kept the wolves at bay. In this case, however, his only protection, the telescope, had, as we have seen, been already knocked to atoms on the thick skull of Boston Bill—luckily, the mahogany of the tube was covered with stout pig's hide, and, although shattered to fragments, yet held together; but it was a truncheon more fit for a fool's bauble than a deadly encounter; true, it sounded loudly when applied on the faces and arms of his assailants, but it scarcely warded off the blows aimed at his own person, and certainly did no harm to those of his antagonists: under these circumstances, and with the fellows swarming up on every side of him, he was obliged, with every blow he struck, to make a fresh indication of retreat, until at length he was borne back quite to the companion, and another instant must either have given his breast to the fearful points clashing around him, or have hurled him headlong down the hatchway. The mutineers saw their advantage, and were not slow to press it.

"Cut him down! cut the villain down!" were cries resounding on all sides, with as much energy as if every party shouting were quite convinced that Peter the Hermit, never strove in a worthier cause; and that, in short, to offer the slightest opposition to their views, was in itself an act worthy of excommunication at least.

"Run round on the other side of him, Jack," cried Yankee Doodle, "while I press him on this. Here, one of you drag old Boston out of the way, and take him forward: he'll come to presently. Another of you mind that helmsman, and, if he dares to interfere, cut his throat."

Up to this period the companions of Boston Bill had been acting upon his previous instructions, which were, that firearms should not be used, as they would be likely to put upon their guard all the cabin passengers. Ignorant of his suspicions that his plot had been discovered, and unable from his insensibility to receive renewed instructions, Yankee Doodle, whose real name was Phillips, and who acted as lieutenant to the worthy Bill of

Boston, appeared still anxious that everything should be done as quietly as possible ; and thinking that with so many assistants it was quite unnecessary to use powder for the destruction of Herbert, his alarm and surprise were considerable, when a sudden light flashed forth from the quarter-deck, apparently from beneath the feet of Herbert, a short, sharp sound of a rifle broke upon the night, and was followed by the death-scream of one of his accomplices, another blaze shot forth from the same spot, accompanied by a second cry, and then burst forth a hearty cheer from at least half a dozen individuals, in which that of the gallant major was clearly perceptible, showing that the whole garrison below were alarmed, and prepared to dispute the capture of the ship.

CHAPTER XLIV.

"I'll grind thy bones to make my bread."

Jack the Giant-Killer.

THE valorous many who are often so impetuous in the bravery of their attack upon a single and unarmed individual, are often equally precipitate in a different emotion, when the tide of combat is likely to run with an equal chance. Thus it happened on the present occasion. No sooner did the supporters of Phillips hear the cheer from the party who from the cabin were rushing to the rescue, than a sudden panic seized them, and, flying from the quarter-deck so quickly as to impede one another in their flight, they only stayed to help on his feet their half-stunned commander, who had just begun to recover his senses, and then made their rapid way toward the fore-castle. By this retreat the others were not slow to profit.

The party who had first fired and brought down his man was old St. John; the second rifle had been discharged by Brigadier Symonds; and now, when the mutineers were in full pursuit, the former vainly tried to impress upon the younger and more fiery spirits of his party the necessity of holding back until they came close up with the fugitives. A great majority of those whom he addressed were, however, young men entirely new to any kind of service, and wholly unaccustomed to discipline.

Excellent as the advice was, in all probability it fell unheeded; or, if heard, might with equally good result have been preached to the winds. The first thing the young men did when bursting from their previous confinement was to fire an aimless and indiscriminate volley against the mass of those that retreated, and then, grasping the barrels of their pieces, a few of which were rifles, and the rest double-barrelled sporting guns, each tried to surpass the other in getting rapidly down the quarter-deck ladder, and giving chase.

"Take it coolly, take it coolly, my dear boys!" cried St. John, who had been in some hard-fought fields in his day, and none knew better the value of the counsel that he gave. It was all in vain. Down poured these raw, undisciplined troops one over the other, in such confusion, that those they sought to capture gained from the haste of their pursuers the very opportunity of retreat from which the others tried to exclude them. Throughout this manœuvre, it must be confessed that Yankee Doodle certainly played his part

well; facing round against his pursuers, keeping them at bay to the best of his ability, cheering his old friends to make good their escape; and, if words or threats could win a battle, flourishing his huge bowie knife, with the most frightful imprecations upon all who should come within its reach. While, however, thus discharging the duties of a general, with a degree of spirit that surprised our hero, who had overheard his misgivings, Herbert snatched up a handspike, which he saw lying at hand, and, making a dash at Yankee, endeavoured to cut him off.

Expertly dodging our hero round the fore part of the engine, Phillips for a time evaded Herbert's blow, and another of his companions engaged our hero in his place. Fleeing, however, from Scylla, the excellent-meaning mutineer fell into the vortex of Charybdis; for, as he turned to fly from Herbert, who should stand before him but the elderly yet athletic quaker, who, though apparently unarmed, and hitherto taking no part in the affray, clearly discovered, by the stern determination of his countenance, that he was at present bent upon no very gentle reception of the mutineer.

Up to this moment, Phillips had retained one pistol in his belt as a sort of prudent reserve in case of extremity; and, seeing how he was now pressed, he in an instant whipped forth its deadly muzzle, thrust it full against the capacious chest of neighbour Broadbrim, until the circular end of the hollow tube resounded upon the firm thorax of the man of peace; and, quite secure that at least this victim must perish for his audacity, he drew the trigger. Snap flew the cock with that fearful click which has proved the death-knell to so many tried spirits—but—there an end! No murderous flash sent forth its sudden glare upon the night. No groan, no cry, no struggle followed, to the dismay of the mutineer, who found, too late, that the fatal weapon had missed fire.

Scarcely, however, had he time to acknowledge this fact to himself, when the quaker's enormous frame was put in motion, and his vice-like arms wound round the mutineer's body with a strength and rapidity of which, till that moment, he had never believed them in any way capable. A sudden fear seized the recreant heart of the would-be murderer, as he became sensible of the enormous gripe by which the breath was almost squeezed from his body.

Some misapprehension of the quaker's purpose seemed to have seized upon his mind; and, while panic-struck to his very soul, he could just muster sufficient articulation to cry—

“Hold back your knife, and I will tell you all; hold back your knife!”

The quaker distinctly heard what the wretched man addressed to him; and, without attempting for an instant to relax his hold, replied—

“I will not attempt to use the carnal weapon, friend, but thee must not invade my repose.”

And lifting him high in the air like some squalling infant, the quaker swung round with a sudden violence his enormous body, and dashed the screeching trembling wretch directly down among the gleaming and fearful bars of the polished engine, through the very space which had been unclosed by the hands of the mutineer himself, to be ready, if necessary, for the murder of Herbert.

The moment the body fell, shrieks of the most piercing kind rose above all the clang of the conflict, and were clearly heard above the ceaseless thunder of the paddle-wheels; the limbs of the wretched man became instantly entangled among the connecting rods of the machinery, while his head and chest falling against the broad disc of the cylinder, he had just sense enough left to perceive the frightful piston-head descending down upon him, touched with the ruddy light that flared fiercely upon it from the furnace, and looking like some angry monster bent on his destruction. With screams again and again renewed, he lifted up his hands, as if to avert this frightful doom, but all in vain. Down came the gleaming, glittering, terrific mass, full upon his prostrate chest, as utterly regardless of his agony as if his cries had been the mere complaining of some other part of the machinery, and striking him with its long heavy bar, some seven or eight inches below the chin, almost cut the body in twain.

Again the guilty being's screams and shrieks for aid rose on the distracted ear of night; perhaps at that terrific moment there may have returned to him the remembrance that this agonizing death was the very one he had himself planned for Herbert. In every direction forth spirted the sanguinary current of his life; and, as if to make the terrible scene still more terrific, high up into the air again darted the huge piston, glittering like silver in the fire-light, and appearing, in the unconsciousness of its nature, to be rejoicing over the destruction it had caused of that living temple which the Deity had framed.

The men who attended the boiler heard the cry, but, as the head of the cylinder was on a level higher than themselves, they could not of course see the mangled corpse that lay there. Alarmed by the firing, they had got into a secure corner themselves, where no chance shot might reach them, and did not know of the terrific expedient to which the quaker had had recourse to feed the engine. As soon, therefore, as the piston regained its regular height of stroke, down it once more descended with its cross arms full on the body of the seaman. Once more the gory fluid darted out—a sort of convulsive, muscular motion of the arms appeared once more to lift up the hands, and then all was over. That soul, with all its direful sins, had sought its last account.

A solemn splash came on the forehead of one of the firemen; dashing it off with his fingers, he found that it was blood. This, and a sort of dull plashing sound, as of some hard substance striking a wet sponge, explained to them the agonized screeches

they had heard. Temporarily stopping the engine, with some difficulty the mangled corpse of the mutineer was removed, and then plunge—plunge—plunge—once more tore forward the Frankenstein of steam.

CHAPTER XLV.

“*Crab*. They fired, it seems, pretty nearly together. Charles’s shot took effect, as I tell you, and Sir Peter’s missed.”—SHERIDAN.

WHILE the frightful scene which we have recorded in the few last foregoing pages was being acted in the engine-room, Herbert succeeded in giving three or four terrific blows with his handspike to the ruffian with whom he was engaged. Many of these the fellow contrived to parry with his left arm, which apparently was as stout and as strong as a weaver’s beam, if any judgment might be formed on this point from the terrific blows which it endured; and between these he constantly endeavoured to run in and stab his enemy, with his right hand.

But our hero, being fully determined against this deadly termination of the affray, no sooner felt the blow to be taken on the seaman’s wrist than, reversing with the speed of lightning the clumsy weapon which he wielded, holding it firmly by both hands in the middle, and favoured by the rebound of the heavy hand, he twirled round the lighter one so as immediately to bring the small end full in the mutineer’s face, and thus not only blind him as to the spot where to strike his blow, but actually present, in addition, a perfect check to his advance. This manœuvre he repeated three or four times, until at last, enraged and bewildered, the man forgot his ward, and down came one of Herbert’s heaviest strokes full upon the fellow’s bare crown. This brought him staggering to his knee; another application of the same remedy felled him to the deck, and, quick as it could follow, a third blow dashed the glittering and dangerous bowie-knife from his hand. To seize this trophy of his conquest with one grasp, and to fix another on the windpipe of the insensible mutineer, formed almost a single act. The rest of the assailants had by this time reached the caboose forward, and were in secure cover, while a sudden flash, followed by the report of a musket or rifle, which it seemed some

of their party had brought on board, not only showed their lurking faces peering forth ready to take any advantage which the imprudence of their adversaries might offer them, but indicated to Herbert, in the most peremptory degree, the useless danger, and, indeed, loss of life, that might ensue from further pursuing the advantage they had already gained, more especially if the mutineers should recover their panic, and once more rush aft, their forces augmented by fresh allies. At this time, it is true, Herbert was not aware of the terrific death inflicted upon the second in command; but even had he been so, the knowledge of that fact would have been insufficient to have altered his dispositions for the night.

"Back, my boys! Fall back to the quarter-deck immediately; fall back to the quarter-deck, and help me to drag this prisoner along," cried he, addressing the others very properly, in right of that appointment by which, in the hour of danger, they had elected to the command of all on board one who had so clearly proved himself to be the person most fitted to succeed the lamented captain whom they had lost.

"Fall back it is," responded Symonds, who proved himself a most admirable lieutenant; "fall back, boys, all of you, steady and in good order," repeated the gallant brigadier.

Taking command of the rear in the retreat, and extending his drawn sword gently towards the quaker, whose attention appeared absorbed by some object in the engine-room,

"Halloa, neighbour Broadbrim!" cried Symonds, in surprise, "have you come out to witness the rout of the Philistines?"

"Why, friend Symonds, thou wouldst not have me be hiding below the blanket, while my companions in travail went up to Ramoth Gilead to battle!"

"Battle!" echoed Symonds. "Well, considering that shots and blows are to be had for nothing, and pretty thickly too, by this and by that, neighbour Broadbrim, you are taking the matter coolly!"

"Rather," responded the quaker, in his dry, quiet way, which, if the major had known all, he would have the more admired. "Such is my wont, friend Symonds, and every creature of the earth after its own kind. What dost thee require now, that we should retire to our couches?"

"Ay, neighbour; anywhere, provided you skip up upon the quarter-deck as quickly as you can, or else these d—d rascals, who seem to have got hold of some firearms, will be peppering our carcases from that infernal cover of acaboose forrard; and as my beautiful decameron seems likely to prove ten days' hard fighting, interspersed with a lively gale or two, and perhaps winding up with a couple of wrecks or so, why you see, neighbour Broadbrim, we shall want every stout recruit like yourself that we can lay our hands on."

"Friend, lead on; I will follow thee."

"Nay, Broadbrim, I beg your pardon; no man shall take the post of honour from my hands while I have life enough in my body to hold it; as second in command on board, I bring up the rearguard, and close the retreat. There! There the devils go at it again!" exclaimed the brigadier, as another flash lit up the whole deck of the steamer, and the deadly whistle of a bullet passing between the brigadier and the stout-hearted quaker declared the party in the caboose to have opened fire upon them.

"The bullets, friend Symonds, have a very peculiar whistle," said he of the broadbrim, as he heard this sound, and then added; "and as for thou thyself, thy marvellous love of fighting seemeth strangely peculiar to a man of peace like myself. However, anything to oblige thee; and since nothing less will serve, I will go before, and thou shalt follow me. Anything for a quiet life, friend Symonds—anything!" and slowly moving on towards the ladder, the worthy friends ascended to the quarter-deck, the brigadier flourishing his drawn sword, which was still dripping with some of the rebellious claret he had lately let loose, and being the last to retreat.

"Ah, my good fellow!" exclaimed Herbert, laying his hand on the shoulder of the quaker, with that hearty approval and welcome which proved so winning to all who ever served with him, "where did you spring from? But I need not ask; no doubt you have been in the thick of the fray. Though you may not have shared in it, I know you would have done so, had we been hard pressed. It was kind of you to come thus readily to our assistance. But it's always the way; those who are the quickest doers will talk the least of their deeds."

"Friend, I have but done my duty," answered the quaker; and because I esteem thee greatly, I confess it pleaseth me, young as thou art, to meet thy approval."

"Then that you do most entirely," exclaimed Herbert, shaking the quaker most heartily by the hand; "and now, friend, come along with me. Your head is as long as your heart is bold. We have need of many such to get safely over the dangers that stand between us and old England; and I want you all now to come and hold a council of war with me as to what will form the best measures to pursue."

"Friend Herbert, friend Herbert!" replied the quaker, gravely shaking his head, "if thou art going to hold a council of *war*," laying a marked emphasis on the last word, "I will have nothing to do with thee nor thy *war* councils either. Dost thou not know and see, friend, my persuasion is one of meekness, charity, and peace to all men? I abhor all war, strife, and bloodshed; therefore, as to holding any council as to how these may be best perpetrated, of a verity I will eschew any such an abomination."

"Well, but surely, neighbour Broadbrim, there cannot be any harm, even according to your persuasion, in holding a council as

to how we may best avoid being slaughtered by these butchering mutineers?"

"Ay, ay, friend, now thou talkest; before thou didst only rage. If thou art willing to hold a council as to how we may best preserve the *peace*, instead of what I must unhesitatingly adjure—a council of *war*, no man will more gladly give thee the benefit of his experience and suggestions—peradventure they may prove humble, indeed, and of but little value—than thy unworthy servant."

"Ha, ha, ha!" rejoined Herbert, laughing, "if it was only the name that alarmed you, we will keep your conscience as quiet as a cat-watched mouse; so, come along. Symonds, my dear fellow," turning to the brigadier, "will you pick out three of our gallant volunteers that you can best depend upon, and take the post of danger?"

"Will I take it? You mean, will I give it up, seeing it's mine by a right as indefeasible as ever Esau sold for a mess of pottage? What is it, may I ask?"

"To take post here with loaded rifles on the break of the quarter-deck, but out of gunshot range yourselves, and fully prepared, every man of you, to pick off the first straggler that may venture to creep out from the enemy's camp, while the rest of us go aft to the wheel, and hold a council."

"Of war?"

"Oh, no, friend," replied Herbert slyly, imitating the tones of the quaker, "not of war, certainly not, but how we may best preserve the peace of the ship, and the preservation of the passengers and crew. I know that I am asking you to take a dangerous command and charge upon yourself," added Herbert, well knowing that by this addition the gallant soldier's thirst for fame would induce him to seize with avidity the post in question, and thus insure not only a most effective officer of videttes, but procure his absence from the council, where his impetuous activity would be a bar rather than any assistance in the path of success.

The gallant brigadier at once expressed himself delighted with the honour confided to his keeping: and, pledging himself that the first living creature who appeared upon the deck forward, should be tried by way of challenge, and, failing to make a good defence by way of answer, be condemned and shot to death then and there, he at once went off to choose his three subordinate volunteers, leaving Broadbrim and Herbert to keep their sharp eyes meanwhile on the forecastle of the steamer from behind the shadow of the mast.

"Friend, thou hast done well and wisely," said Broadbrim; "I see that we all did the same when we chose thee for our captain. Nature herself has formed thee for command, no inconsiderable qualification, for which is the ready art which contributed so much to the greatness of him whom men call the Emperor Napoleon; which is the habit, namely, of speedily discerning the exact capacities and fitness of every subordinate, and placing him

in that very position where his peculiarities will be a means of helping forward thy service instead of retarding it? That young man—albeit he is not without good qualities—is right valiant in the front of the battle, and well fitted, by his wondrous love of strife and unquietness, to daunt an enemy, or lead on his own soldiers; but he is too ready of speech and too chary of thought for the council-chamber. Dost thou not see a dark, dusky object, stealing along toward us?” and neighbour Broadbrim here pointed in the direction of the bow.

Herbert looked attentively for a few moments, saw a form of shadow, and as the steamer occasionally mounted the crest of one huge wave, and then shot down rapidly in the hollow of another, the moonlight playing over her decks, gave to various masses of shade a perpetually varying position, which rendered it extremely difficult to say whether the dark spot in question was stationary or moving.

“Things dance so in the moonlight, I can scarcely see whether it’s a cask or a man,” said Herbert.

“Friend, thine eyes are younger than mine; but I fear, for thy sake, that mine are the sharper of the two. I am not much given to fancyings of any kind; but unless thou mislead’st me, methinks I can see not only a human head, but the human body to which it belongs, moved by a human pair of hands and knees, on which it appears to be creeping.”

“Though I cannot detect the particularities you mention,” replied Herbert, laughing at the description of Broadbrim, “yet still I confess I almost think it has moved somewhat nearer to us since you first pointed it out, even though my eyesight is not any of the best.”

“Then here, friend, is a telescope that will greatly assist it on this occasion.”

Herbert, without looking in the direction of the quaker, put out his hand, expecting to have a large night-glass put into it, instead of which, to his surprise, he grasped nothing but a cold and apparently iron rod. Turning his head slightly round, his amazement was extreme to find that the man of peace, meekness, and charity had put nothing less into his hand than the barrel of one of the rifles that had been standing near. Broadbrim read the amazement in his face, and, as if answering its mute language, added—

“If yonder dark spot be only a barrel, friend, the mere drilling a hole in it with a rifle-ball can do no harm to any one, and simply show our enemies that we are on the alert; but if it be as I suspect, a man of blood and violence advancing this way, he can only have adopted that creeping stealth with a view to disturb our peace, and peace is a blessing which every man is bound to maintain. Ah! it is no tub, friend; or, if so, it is a tub that wears very long hair and a wondrously bright eye, for I saw the last sparkle of the moonlight shine down that instant upon both.

Do thy duty, friend Herbert, do thy duty, before the peace is broken."

"Is this rifle loaded?"

"Friend Herbert, it were else an idle toy. And what dost thou see in my garb or countenance to think I could trifle at any time, much less in moments of emergency like these?"

"Egad! Broadbrim, you are right, I do believe," softly said the other, as another roll of the steamer brought into the clear moonlight something that looked wondrously like a human hand spread out as if to steady the creeper. "I think I see his head, Broadbrim. I don't want to kill the poor devil; I'll aim at his arm."

"Do as thou wilt, friend; I will not advise thee to hurt any one; but, remember, if by thy not doing thy duty the peace is broken, and the lives of thy friends are lost or endangered, their blood will be upon thy head. Do thy duty, I say therefore, friend, and fear nothing, for I am a man of peace, and peace is the truest charity."

"There is no mistake in your charity," replied Herbert, raising the rifle to his shoulder.

CHAPTER XLVI.

“But what is very extraordinary, the ball struck.”

School for Scandal.

ONE instant easily sufficed for the aim of so good a shot as our hero, and in the next, forth flew the fatal messenger upon its deadly errand. Scarcely had the ball had time to whistle through the air, when, with a shrill cry of pain, there bounded from the spot towards which Herbert had directed his fire the figure of a man, who, leaping swiftly towards the hatchway of the fore cabin, the doors were opened by his companions, and he at once obtained shelter from all further annoyance.

“Of a truth thou hast a steady hand, friend,” said the man of peace. “But here comes the talkative Irishman, who denieth his country; we may, therefore, now safely confide to him and the brave youths that accompany him the task of keeping watch, while we go, as was before proposed, and hold a council as to how we may best preserve the tranquillity that, I greatly fear, is in much danger of being broken.”

As the quaker said this, Herbert turned round, and beheld approaching Symonds and his outpost-men.

“Why, my boy,” said the gallant brigadier, “what sport is there in the wind now?”

Scarcely had the words passed his mouth, when a light flashed forth from the door of the caboose forward.

“Ha! the villains are not satisfied yet; they want a little more dosing,” said the brigadier, wiping, as he spoke, a streak of blood from his cheek.

“What is that?” said Herbert. “Are you hit?”

“Oh! only by a rifle-bullet through the cheek,” replied the brigadier. “You see the rascals have got under cover, and they won’t be content yet until they get a few more broken bones. Suppose we make a little bit of camisade, and storm that infernal den of theirs, and put every mother’s hornet of them to the sword?”

“Why, friend, if thou dost take the nest, it would, indeed, be idle not to crush the hornets,” quoth Broadbrim.

“Bravo, neighbour!” exclaimed the brigadier; “what say you, captain?”

“Why,” answered Herbert, “I think we may manage matters better by a little deliberation, and therefore I would not risk the

loss of life by any steps so decided just at present. As soon as we have thought over the point, we will take some means to get rid of the nuisance of those fellows firing from that caboose in this way."

Here another shot was fired, but only struck the mast.

"There," said the brigadier, "that's the pretty entertainment we shall enjoy all night; and no man knows better than I do what it is to be exposed to this guerilla kind of warfare. Many and many a goodly fellow have I, in my day, seen picked off thus; and, depend upon it, if we don't turn those blackguards out of that, we shall lose more men in the course of this night's watch than it would take us twice over to storm the hold and carry it at once."

"Well, brigadier," said Herbert, "I'll not deny there is considerable justice in what you say, and, perhaps, in a few minutes we may all resolve to follow your advice; but, for the present, we will content ourselves with this line of operations. The helmsman shall sit down at the stern, so that he can keep out of shot. We will hold our council in the saloon, and in the meanwhile you and your volunteers, on your outpost duty here, get under a good cover, and at once commence a heavy fire on that caboose-head. Whether any body is in it or not, riddle it to atoms. Don't fire all together, but simply at intervals of about five minutes, then two minutes, then seven, then one, then five, and so on; and thus, by means of this irregularity, those vagabonds will never be able to keep themselves safe, or scarcely dare to pop up to take aim at us."

"And even if they do, the apprehension they will be under at being hit in the attempt, will make their aim so unsteady, that there will be little or no danger from it."

"We are just the boys to keep up a regular rattling fire, and so here goes for the first."

As he said this, the brigadier presented his rifle, and instantly discharged it at the caboose, while the cry of mingled pain and rage that followed the act warranted the belief that some execution had been produced by the discharge.

"I caught some sneaking blackguard there, at any rate," said the brigadier.

"Yes, there is no mistake about that," replied Herbert; "and if you persevere, I think you'll catch some more of them."

"Will I persevere! will I not?" replied the brigadier. "Upon my honour, it's a very pretty little amusement for the rest of the evening, and I thank you mightily for the suggestion. We will do some execution on them yet. Now, Rollins, you shall have your turn," addressing one of his volunteers, who answered to the invitation by speedily discharging his piece in the same direction.

"Keep up that at intervals during the night," said Herbert, "and I don't think there is much chance of our being annoyed by them. They evidently haven't many pieces under their con

trol to begin with, and their ammunition must be but scanty at best. And now, as I think we are pretty secure from interruption, we will go below and talk over what is best to be done."

"Well and good," said the brigadier; "and, as that is your errand, you have my proxy in the talk; and, above all things, I charge you to remember, as far as I am concerned, I'm for bould measures throughout, and nothing short of it."

"I'll not forget," said our hero; "and, depend upon it, we shall decide on some line of action in which we can all agree."

"And that, whatever it is, will be sure to be the right one," added the brigadier. "Hold back, Best, and don't cheat me out of my turn to fire."

As the brigadier said this, he once more presented his rifle, with all the glee of a schoolboy popping at a cock robin, while the other passengers, in the best way they could, slipped down below to the saloon.

CHAPTER XLVII.

“Old Giaffir sate in his divan.”

Bride of Abydos.

AFTER the alarming confusion that had taken place on the upper deck, it may easily be imagined that every soul on board had abandoned all thoughts of repose. The ladies, young and old, had most of them forgotten their sea-sickness, and, hastily clothing themselves, congregated together in the privacy of their own saloon, where they pursued weeping and wailing to every possible extent, and under various aspects and disguises. Some, even in that hour of extremity, did not forget to appear in the smartness of divers gay caps and ribands; others, throwing aside all personal considerations, joined the general lot of mourners in the undress of ordinary muslin nightcaps, trimmed with lace; a few of the older and more privileged married ladies, openly disdaining to consort with parties as helpless as themselves, abandoned the primitive simplicity of the last style of head-dress, and, muffled and wrapped up in various modes and manners, ventured into the main cabin, where was held that council which neighbour Broadbrim so boldly asserted to be called for the sole purpose of preserving the peace. Neither were the gentlemen—at least, many of the more sedate and mercantile, which, by the way, does not at all import the civil portion of the community—much less composed, on first starting from their sleep, at the sound of firearms. The worthy maker of brass candlesticks, who had left his soul in the three per cent. consols in Threadneedle-street, and only hazarded at sea himself and only daughter—this worthy individual, when St. John had first given the general alarm, demanded of neighbour Broadbrim, as he passed his cot,—“What is the cause of all the firing on deck?”

“Friend, dost thee want to know?—If so, thee hadst better come up and see.”

“I think you might have the civility, sir, to tell a gentleman what is going on when he asks you,” said the candlestick-maker.

“Well then, friend, since thou thinkest so, I may as well briefly tell thee that the crew are rising to seize all the treasure that has been embarked on board belonging to some of the passengers—hadst thou not better, as a mercantile man, rouse thyself from thy sloth, come on deck, and help the brave officers of the ship, or

those whom we have appointed in their place, to maintain peace and good order?"

"Peace and good order! fiddle-te-de," said the candlestick-maker—"It is extremely wrong in passengers to bring such large sums to sea to tempt the crew. There's none of my money—and I owe it to my family not to go and expose my life, which is precious to them."

"Very well, friend—as thou wilt," returned the quaker; "and, in such case, I suppose thou wilt lie still. But then, should the mutineers succeed, I understand thou art likely to pay dear for a few minutes' slumber, as is generally the custom in such cases."

"Custom, sir! What is the custom?"

"Simply, friend, to cut all the throats of all the passengers. If thee wishes to have that done for the benefit of thy family, of course thee must benefit them after thine own fashion."

"Mr. Quaker! Mr. Quaker!" bawled the candlestick-maker. But Broadbrim would condescend to no parley on the subject, and in another minute had passed up to the deck. It is needless to add that the candlestick-maker was soon seen shivering in his unmentionables, and running about from the bedside of one old gentleman to that of any other whom he could find skulking below, and selfishly preferring their own notions of individual security to boldly facing the enemy and danger, until he entirely succeeded in making them all as wretched as himself.

The whole, then, of this worthy class were now fidgetting about the saloon, comforting their souls with hot brandy-and-water, wringing their hands, pulling long faces, and putting all sorts of absurd questions to those who had stoutly gone on deck and shared in the brunt of the battle; hovering round the table at which the council of war was being held, with looks that plainly indicated how entirely they felt their fate to depend upon the resolutions now pending before them. Still, for all this, these worthy people could not forbear from indulging that propensity so favourable to their class of gabbling about a matter respecting which they could understand nothing. So loudly talked these heroes of the saloon, that none of the real fighters could hear themselves speak; a circumstance which at length so enraged old St. John, that he rose, and, turning to the noisy crowd, exclaimed—

"Gentlemen, if you want all your throats cut, you cannot do better than go on as you are! but, if any one of you should have the slightest notion of reaching England in safety, pray go to your cabins, go on deck, go anywhere, do anything but distract us with this noise."

In moments of danger how rapidly all other earthly considerations, save those of ability, sink into insignificance!

As this remark was conveyed to them, not one of the non-combatants ventured to reply—the whole circle of nightcaps, blue, red, and yellow, all simultaneously bowed like courtiers round an

Eastern throne, and a perfect silence reigned in the saloon, broken only by the occasional discharge of the rifles overhead.

"Now that at length we can hear ourselves speak," continued Mr. St. John, "perhaps I shall have the voices of all with me when I suggest that we cannot do better than hear the plans for our safety, which may at present be entertained by the gentleman whom we unanimously elected to the post of our captain."

"Certainly! certainly!" answered one and all; and all parties paused to hear what Herbert, who was thus called upon, should say.

Now, our hero, though an admirable hand in the thick of the battle, had never hitherto attempted anything like a public speech: he, therefore, felt himself a little at a loss how to commence. The gravity, and indeed solemnity of their position, and the concourse of people round him, formed something more imposing than he at all liked to contemplate; while, in addition to all other spectators, the younger portion of the female passengers might have been detected overcoming their scruples, and peeping at sundry corners through partially opened doors, &c. The very diffidence, however, under which he laboured, produced him the greater favour; and, at length, the few first words and a tap upon the table reassuring him, he managed to get on indifferently well.

"Gentlemen, my plan, on which I have no doubt many of you will be able to improve, is, at present, simply this: to afford protection for us all, through what remains of the night, by getting a barricade across the break of the quarter-deck, so as to prevent the mutineers from hindering our party by their fire, and then, in the morning, we can determine whether we shall attempt a bold measure by storming the fore cabin, and either taking prisoners all we find alive, or whether we shall simply content ourselves with acting on the defensive, until we meet with some chance vessel, or possibly some man-of-war, that, by hoisting a flag of distress, we can induce to venture down to our relief. 'The first thing that appears to me is to determine this simple question—Shall we act on the defensive until we can gain relief, or shall we consider the aggressions of the crew a sufficient justification to us for punishing the dastardly outrage they have attempted to commit, by showing them no quarter? If you are inclined to vote upon this point, I think we shall have no difficulty in deciding on the measures by which we ought to carry out such a resolution."

A slight applause followed this speech: the matter was then put to the vote, whether active or passive steps should be taken.

"Gentlemen," said neighbour Broadbrim, "before you come to a decision on this point, I have only one word to say, as a man of peace, and it amounts to this—that though it may seem at first more humane to take the passive course, yet I trust that, in coming to your vote, you will bear this in mind, that it is pos-

sible we may not fall in with any ship at all, or, at least, for many days; and as our object is to prevent the peace being broken any more, it is a matter well worthy your consideration, whether the strongest measures, to subdue these rebellious traitors, would not after all be the most merciful; since, if by any mistaken lenity at first, we should but afford them an encouragement to grow more outrageous in their designs, many valuable lives might be thus lost in endeavouring to protect those who have forfeited all claim to any indulgence. For my own part, I confess I think the first party to be regarded is that of the innocent ladies whom I see around us, and who would be the most severe sufferers, if, by any mistaken humanity of ours, the sons of Belial should triumph. I confess, therefore, that as far as my vote may go, I shall be inclined to vote for taking at once the hornet's nest, and extirpating those that have shelter in it."

Most of the young men cheered this determined speech from neighbour Broadbrim, not being in truth quite prepared to hear him propound such doctrines; while the older hands, and especially St. John, shook his head, as if doubting its soundness and propriety. One or two other speakers followed, but they were all clearly inclined to lean towards the side of Herbert, who advocated, in the most decided manner, the propriety of waiting until such an irresistible force could be brought to bear upon the mutineers as should overwhelm all opposition, and by thus compelling them to surrender, avoid every possibility of the effusion of blood, and leave their punishment to the offended laws of the country under whose flag they sailed. The question was finally put to the vote. This feeling prevailed; and it was unanimously decided that only defensive measures should be pursued.

"Friend," said Broadbrim, "we have at length come to our resolution, and may Heaven ordain that it shall prove the proper determination! yet, before we separate, permit me to enter my protest against it, though, at the same time, I hope I may prove mistaken in my augury of evil, and, at any rate, no one shall be more ready to lend every support that I can to thy views, always provided that I can conscientiously do so, consistently with my persuasion, as a man of peace."

"I, neighbour Broadbrim," said Herbert, "will be thy surety that no endeavours will be lacking on thy part, and as to your augury of ill from our taking too weak a course, I have little doubt that you will find it unsupported by fact hereafter, for the boldest of the mutineers got severely damaged last night, and his second in command is by no means free from considerable waverings of spirit in his bad cause."

"The second in command!" said one of the young men with mustachios. "Do you mean that fellow who commanded their retreat last night, and whom the others called Yankee Doodle?"

"The same," said Herbert.

"You need give yourselves but little trouble about him," replied

the mustache; "I should think, by this time, he must be whipped as fine as egg-flip."

"Why so?"

"Why, didn't you see one of our party throw him down into the engine-room, with his chest right under the piston-rod?"

"Well, that is a most singular retribution. I was busy capturing another of the gang, and did not see it. It was the very fate he chalked out for me. He was a good stout fellow too. Who is the Sampson who was strong enough to throw him down into the engine?"

"Why, neighbour Broadbrim to be sure."

"He snapped on my chest a pistol," said Broadbrim, who seemed to feel himself called upon for some vindication of his conduct, "and as I abhor carnal weapons, and those that wrongfully use them, I wrestled with him, and the Lord delivered him into my hand."

"Well, then," said Herbert, "that is another reason why we may better afford to look for victory from milder measures."

"I hope thou mayst be right, friend Herbert."

"I trust so," said our hero; "and, as the first step, I should propose to invite all the crew to come aft, and we will accommodate them in the saloon. It would be a thousand pities if any of the seamen or engineers belonging to the steamer, all of whom, as far as we can hitherto see, have done their duty, and refrained from joining in this outbreak, should now be seduced by any of these scoundrels to assist in their villany."

"Surely, Herbert," interposed Nautila, "you would not run such an unnecessary risk as that you have just proposed. However desirable it might be to protect the crew from being tempted, and to augment our own forces, still there could not be a greater risk than to allow any lot of men to come into the saloon on such terms, when, after all, they might ultimately turn out to be spies, and bribed over to the interests of our enemies, and thus able at any moment to rise upon us from within, while a simultaneous attack was got up from without, and so, placed between two fires, we could scarcely help losing the day."

"The counsel which the maiden gives is good and true," added Broadbrim, "and her discretion is equal to her comeliness. Would I had a daughter like thee this day to stand beside my lonely hearthstone!" and the quaker affectionately pressed Nautila's delicate fingers within his own powerful hand.

"Heaven has given us all our sorrows and our joys," added Nautila, "and no doubt you have many of the latter to make up for any loneliness of the kind you have mentioned. But, if I had not so excellent a parent of my own, I might well feel myself happy in the protection of so upright a person as you appear to be."

"Come, neighbour Broadbrim, no flirting," said Herbert; "as much counselling as you please."

"My days are past for that," said the quaker with a sigh;
"still, as a profane poet hath said,—

" ' Who can see the beauty, and the sheen of beauty's cheek,
Nor feel the heart can never all grow old ? ' "

But, how about thy plan of having the crew aft among our number ? "

"Why," said Herbert, "I think Miss St. John's objections to my plan are too insuperable to be overcome ; and now, gentlemen," addressing the various parties, who still sat round the council-table, "as we are now come to a decision, which I think it will be best for us to adopt, I will undertake to have our plans carried into effect with as little delay as possible ; and whenever the *minutiæ* obliges me to call upon any of you for your services, I doubt not they will be rendered with alacrity. Till such time, I shall consider you have placed your safety in my keeping. It shall then be my duty to watch over it most vigilantly ; and, until I am compelled to summon you to action, it may not be unwise in you to get what repose is in your power. I, therefore, now propose that we break up for the night, that the younger members come and arrange with me their various watches, and that the seniors of our party be at liberty to retire, if they think fit, to their repose."

"Before this step is taken," said Mr. St. John, in a voice calculated to command the general attention, "I have to request that you will hear a few words from me. I have heard patiently the various propositions of others—I have now a proposition to make myself."

But, as the proposition of Mr. St. John was one not only of great importance, but, under all the circumstances of the case, remarkably singular, it would be treating him and it with an injustice foreign to our nature not to afford it all the dignity of a new chapter.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

“Welcome, gentle Signor.
We lack’d your counsel and your help to-night.”
Othello.

“GENTLEMEN,” said Mr. St. John, rising, “I shall not detain you long; and this, therefore, is one of the best reasons why, during the interval that I may occupy in addressing you, you should afford me your best attention. But there is a much better reason than that, and it lies in this: the proposition I am about to unfold to you comprises a matter of the most vital interest to you all.”

If the confused nervousness of Herbert had before proclaimed how little he had been accustomed to address his fellow-creatures, the dignified manner, the deep and solemn tone, the self-assured possession of his subject, and, more than all, his perfect and clear pronunciation, all bore witness, to those who were capable of criticism on such a subject, that Mr. St. John had not only had great experience in addressing public assemblies, but had been a practised and admired speaker among auditors of no mean nor unpolished note. It was quite clear, moreover, none knew better the mode of obtaining a fair hearing.

Before the first sentence was finished, crowded as the saloon was, the silence that reigned had something in its perfectness that was not only startling, but painful. Fixing his bright and deep-set eyes on those around him, the speaker allowed a considerable pause to take place before proceeding with that matter which he was about to urge.

“Gentlemen,” proceeded Mr. St. John, when he perceived that the attention of his audience was attracted to his subject, “perhaps some of you may be aware that the avowed object which the mutineers now possess, the latent cause, I may say, which has led to this ferocious outrage, is a large sum in gold, now on board this vessel, the greater portion of which belongs, I believe, to me. What share of the specie any other part of this party may possess” —looking around—“I know not, but the sum which I now have on board is about seventy-five thousand pounds in coins and ingots of gold.”

Here a buzz of admiration ran round the listeners, many of whom looked as if they could have devoured the speaker with kindness. All of them smiled on him most benignly, and one or

two ladies in muslin nightcaps murmured, in an audible voice, "Amiable young man!"

That Mr. St. John was amiable, we who know him have no doubt; but as yet he certainly did not appear to have uttered anything that stamped his amiability; while, as to his youth, it may at first appear singular that such a term should have been given to a gentleman who obviously could never expect to see again his five-and-sixtieth year. Still, however, if any one be surprised at the term, that surprise will evaporate when we mention the fact that the ladies who pronounced this eulogium were parties known to the world as single women of a certain age. Alas! so completely does the magic power of gold invest with its yellow charms any object, that to mortal eyes it appears at once to assume all the beauty of the rainbow, all the freshness of the morning, all the virtue of the sun.

Various other exclamations were also heard, and numbers of the passengers seemed almost unable to refrain from admiring the audacity of the man who had the power to proclaim himself worth seventy-five thousand pounds in counted gold. The vague speculations and idle boasting of your after-dinner merchant, who sips his port and confesses himself worth a score of plums—all that sort of wealth seemed at once to fade immeasurably into the distance. These were mere boasts of that which might never be seen, nor felt, nor realized. This was palpable and enduring to the life—it came home to the hearts of all—they almost expected to see it dropping out of his pockets as he spoke, and vain visions of his giving away a little of it—a very little of it—to each of them, hovered faintly in the distance. *Seventy-five thousand pounds in gold!* Never was a man listened to with such awe before—nothing short of the appearance of Jupiter Ammon in person could have equalled the effect. To say that a pin might have been heard dropping is to have recourse to a bathos—every person present appeared to hold his breath in utter wonderment what this wonderful being would say next. Keen and satirical as we have seen the old man to be, it may easily be imagined that no part of the effect produced by his announcement of his wealth escaped him. The least perceptible curl of the lip might have been detected, as he paused for a few minutes and then proceeded.

"Gentlemen, do not fear that you now listen to a garrulous old man, who, forgetful of the indulgent hearing you have extended to him, is going to force upon you the unimportant details of his private history. I know that in what simply relates to the obscure individual before you no interest can be taken, as far as regards myself; therefore I will merely say that I have long pretended, though I fear but unworthily, to the honour of being a philosopher."

"What, in the name of fortune, is coming now?" whispered one or two of his hearers.

"I confess I have felt great grief in finding that the dirty dross which I am obliged to carry to England——"

"The old fool's mad!" angrily exclaimed the Birmingham candlestick-maker, in a tone of voice that could scarcely have failed to reach Mr. St. John, and which, at any rate, fully raised the wrath of neighbour Broadbrim, who was standing close at hand, and whose stern and significant frown caused the fat turner of brass to sink into a quaver through the rest of his observation, which appeared to be to the effect — "Seventy-five thousand pounds dirty dross! What asylum has this old fellow escaped from!"

Something like the previous silence having been resumed, Mr. St. John proceeded—"to England has been the cause, not only of fomenting a frightful mutiny, but of causing more than one life to be lost in its defence, among those who were foolish enough to envy any one its possession, and has entailed considerable danger and some wounds upon those gentlemen with whom I have the honour to be associated as fellow-travellers. This may perhaps be owing to the imperfect state of our nature; but it gives me equal pain, nevertheless—a pain which I assure you is greatly increased by the probability that the mischievous influence of this money has not yet perhaps found its pause or climax. For myself, I confess my notions on these subjects may be wrong, or even absurd; but I have always endeavoured so to educate myself, that I may esteem nothing on earth so contemptible as a love of this vile dross beyond the simple point which the necessities of life may demand. I cannot help thinking, therefore, that I at least should be very criminal—certainly very inconsistent, and, in my own mind, remarkably foolish—if I for a moment permitted the slightest desire to retain this money to weigh in the balance, not only against the safety of those whom I now see around me, but even against the existence of a single life among the mutineers, criminal as they may be. I now therefore assure you, gentlemen, that I am perfectly ready to secure your comfort and safety by an absolute and entire surrender to the mutineers of every farthing that I possess on board."

The burst of exclamation that followed this conclusion of Mr. St. John's sentence exceeds all belief. Every species of cry appeared to be raised that the English language could afford in a single breath. He was pronounced—mad! noble! generous! munificent! twaddling! doting! and a thousand things besides. At last, after the murmur had subsided, he at length obtained an opportunity of finishing what he had to say.

"I confess," resumed Mr. St. John, "that, when in the middle of the night I was called from my sleep by intelligence that the crew were on their way to the saloon, intent on murder, plunder, and violence of every description, I had no hesitation in deciding that, little as I desired to retain my money,

that moment was not the time to yield it. The concession might have been attributed to the contemptible emotions of fear. Now, however, that we have repulsed those who have assailed us—and I feel myself at liberty to act without the possibility of a misconception of the principle that guides my conduct—when I find that the retention of this money by me may end in the loss of some life upon which I had no sort of claim, and on which, if I had every claim, no motive should induce me to exercise it—I gladly take this first opportunity of at once intimating that I desire no one to be involved in strife for my benefit; and if the mere surrender to the mutineers of the specie now on hoard can procure peace, my act and deed should be the first to secure for us that blessing.”

Renewed murmurs and exclamations here burst forth, but they were all suddenly interrupted and speedily hushed by the sudden starting up of the tall gaunt man who rejoiced in the name of Ebenezer Wire. The sponsors who had stood for this youth at the font seemed to have had a very fair share of divinatory knowledge, since anything more wiry than Ebenezer had ceased to grow, since the day when baptismal water sprinkled his forehead, could not be.

In height Ebenezer stood about six feet three; he was spindle-shanked and bow-legged to an eminent degree; his body seemed also to be full as thin as his legs, and had just that wretched, meagre, famine-speaking appearance that distinguishes the Italian greyhound. His cheeks were bloodless, drawn together, and wearing the appearance of parchment; his cheek-bones were exceedingly high; his eyes, of the lightest grey, were very small, sunk far deep in his head, and fringed with a dingy yellow kind of eyelash; long straggling sandy whiskers met under his chin, and hair of the same description came very low down to a point on his forehead; his nose was of the species which the world calls Roman, and which the scientific have long since decreed to appertain to the “*facies hippocratica*,” the nostrils being very high, the lips going in to a marked extent under them, and the chin equally protruding outwards, much after that style of visage which little boys and girls, when their grandmothers are not by, so irreverently style the nutcracker. The whole of Ebenezer’s clothes appeared to have been made on his attaining the age of twenty-one years, and since that time to have been worn so perpetually as actually to have fretted away until they hung in the loosest and barest of all possible folds about him. As a climax and finish to his figure, he possessed two large bony hands, the nails of which it seemed to be his delight to train, as nearly as possible, into the resemblance of eagle’s talons, they being equally long, equally sharp, and equally black.

Among the observant of his fellow-passengers he had hitherto been chiefly noticed for two habits, those, namely, “of eating everything and saying nothing.” His taciturnity was so great,

that even at table his only mode of asking for food was by holding his plate with one hand, and pointing with the other to the viands which he desired to devour. On the first day at dinner, after doing inimitable justice to soup, fish, and roast beef, a young cornet on board, from Montreal, vowed that he saw him despatch three fowls, and some bets were said to be at this moment pending whether Ebenezer really had any voice at all, or was one of those unfortunates who are brought forth dumb. If any such wager, however, did exist, it was doomed to be speedily solved.

CHAPTER XLIX.

“Then shall I rest secure from force or fraud.”

SHAKESPEARE.—*Henry VI.*

“WHAT, you sir! You mad, cracked-brain Britisher. What's that you say! You'll purchase peace, as you call it, by giving up all the specie on board! Tarnation! I guess you'll do nothing of the sort! that's what you won't, I guess. Who authorized you, I should like to know, to make any such proposition? No one, I reckon! It's just like you Englishers, to think that nobody else in the world has any money, or any property, or anything else, besides yourselves. Give up all the specie to purchase peace! Tarnation rot the peace! I'd have you to know, I calculate, that some of that specie is my money, by which I intend to turn a pretty good round penny in England, or else I'm pretty considerably wrong, over the left, I reckon. Give up my money, indeed! that I've been battling so hard for all my life, because there happens to be a little bit of a rumpus amongst the boys forward, there, to lay hold of it. No, that I won't! not a penny of it; not a shaving of a penny; they may cut me into fifty thousand pieces first, and then I won't; and if you go for to count on anything of the sort, you calculate pretty considerably without your host, I reckon, that's what you do. Once for all, I say, I won't listen to any such damnable proposition, for all the mutineers that ever swam upon salt water; and now let them take their change out of that, I guess, and see whether they like it. I know how to handle a bowie knife, that's what I do, with the best of

them. I'm a Kentucky man, that's what I am; and if the worst comes to the worst, and I don't slit some of their drinking, guzzling, guttling, swallow-pipes, may the great sun never rise this blessed morn to poke his nose up slap clean in the middle of the day, and cut his stick right clean off to bed in a red night-cap, if I don't, so I tell you! There's no mistake about me. I'm Ebenezer Wire, that's who I am; and I care for neither man nor devil, that's what I don't; and I won't give up a penny of my gains for one nor both of them, so that's every word I'll say about it, I reckon."

During this elegant harangue, Ebenezer had leaned forward on the table on his two hands, or, rather we should say, the thumbs and fingers thereof; for they were all arched and spread out just like the claws of that bird of prey we have already named, and, in his fearful energy, he seemed to have digged them into the mahogany very much, as if he intended to make them meet on the other side of the polished plane.

He spoke with the most intense excitement of spirit and manner. Every muscle of his thin, sinewy form seemed put in motion; his eyes, for a moment, opened to their fullest extent, so as almost to present something not far short of a natural size; and his deep sepulchral voice issued forth with a fierceness and rapidity few could have imagined possible from his emaciated appearance. All the while he spoke, he kept turning round his excited countenance, as if to scan the thoughts of every hearer; and, altogether, a more extraordinary specimen of a public speaker could scarcely have been made. The chief thing that struck his hearers was the look of terror by which he seemed most plainly to have evinced his apprehension that in every one around he beheld some enemy, secret or avowed, ready to seize upon his darling money. As soon as he had resumed his seat, Mr. St. John again arose, and, wholly unmoved by the coarseness of the other, made him a very polite bow, and at the same time calmly inquired—

"Pray, sir, may I ask what is the amount of specie that you have on board?"

"Nigh upon a thousand pounds," fiercely retorted Ebenezer.

"I am sorry it should be in such jeopardy," quietly remarked Mr. St. John. "With regard, gentlemen, to the property of others, I do not pretend to arrogate to myself any notion of even hinting at the circumstances which ought to regulate its disposition; and, notwithstanding the peculiar elegance and polished eloquence of the gentleman who has just resumed his seat, my motives and sentiments remain unchanged. Others may do with their [property] what they please: till sufficient reason is shown me for the contrary, I shall, however, dispose of my own property how I like. As I said before, I am perfectly willing to surrender it to the mutineers, and think it wholly unworthy of any struggle that would cost one single drop of human blood. The notions which I entertain would forbid me to acquire treasure at such a

price, and neither on such terms would I retain it. If we are to be engaged in a hand-to-hand struggle with the desperate men who have managed to get on board under the guise of passengers in the fore cabin, success is only to be purchased at the sacrifice of many of the lives of those I now see around me. Suppose then, for a moment, my treasure safe at the destination I once assigned it, with what satisfaction could I regard that worthless hoard, the preservation of which had been so dearly purchased? Do not therefore over-estimate the value of the sacrifice on my part. Under the circumstances of the case, it is the most agreeable course I could pursue."

"Friend St. John," said Broadbrim, rising as soon as the other had resumed his seat, "I rise to dissuade thee from any generous intentions thou hast just declared, though I do so on very different grounds from that of friend Ebenezer Wire, who, with a circumstantiality for which we cannot be too thankful, has informed us that he is a Kentucky man, and much skilled in the use of that carnal weapon, called the bowie-knife. The ground on which I put it to the friends here assembled that we shall not accept thy munificent offer of yielding up thy princely fortune to the mutinous robbers who seek to despoil thee, is this—that we should, by so doing, be guilty of an act of treachery ourselves to the great body of society. I submit, friend St. John, that we should thereby be holding out in perpetuity a vast encouragement to all future mutineers; that we should, indeed, be breeding a new set and school of depredators, who would no sooner hear of a sum of money or gold about to be embarked in a trading-packet or steamship, than they would, either as passengers or crew, find their way on board, and during the voyage rise and master the officers, and make the owners of the treasure, whoever they might be, either yield up the money quietly, or fight to the death in the defence of it. See then, by this means, what thou wouldst do. Trade thou wouldst almost entirely stop; to commerce thou wouldst put nearly a perfect end. Merchants would be afraid to travel any longer from the old world to the new, or from the new world to the old. Capitalists would become terror-stricken, and no longer remit the precious metals from country to country. Industry would sicken and die beneath this cruel oppression, and some of the greatest means of national prosperity be rendered extinct. Law thou wouldst overpower, and justice mock. None but men-of-war could, with any means of safety, undertake to carry the necessary remittances from one nation to another, at ruinous rates of freightage. And if the seamen of trading vessels once set a general example of mutineering to plunder the freight of their ships, how couldst thou ensure that crews of men-of-war would not follow this pernicious example, unless, indeed, thou couldst change the stamp of human nature, even which task, friend Herbert, might, peradventure, be somewhat more desirable than to interpose these perils between the nations of the earth."

"By the great roar of Niagara," cried Ebenezer Wire, suddenly starting up, "if that ere argument isn't more convincing eloquence than ever mother Sheba heard from father Solomon!"

"Peace, friend, thou profanest!" said the quaker, motioning to his seat Ebenezer, who, with a look of the greatest deference, at once obeyed.

"No, no, friend!" pursued Broadbrim, "we not only owe it to society, but we owe it to ourselves, which, though a less debt, is one perfectly imperative, in this case, not to sacrifice so vast a treasure to a few cowardly, dishonest robbers, whom we may easily reduce to submission, and deliver over to punishment. We owe it to ourselves, I say, friend St. John, not to yield to such wretches one single point that may hereafter prove us, in the eyes of the world, to have acted from a selfish sense of fear, instead of that manly, straightforward uprightness which marks the conduct of all who know their duty, and are determined to pursue it. Pardon me, therefore, friend, if I venture to advise thee to retire for the present to thy rest, to sleep on the noble and most liberal offer thou hast made, to consider maturely whether, after all, it embraces the wisest conduct, and the most perfect principles, and to communicate thy conclusions thereupon at the next council of peace, which we shall hold in the morning."

Here Broadbrim looked round at those who sat near him, as much as to say,—

"Don't you all agree with me, gentlemen?"

And Herbert, whose mind most fully echoed every sentiment the quaker had propounded, signified as much by a premonitory tap with his knuckles on the table.

In an instant, down came upon the mahogany both the huge bony fists of Ebenezer Wire; and the torrent of applause which followed was quite as loud, and certainly more unanimous than that which followed St. John's princely proposition of abandoning his wealth to the rebels.

Herbert, well knowing the disposition, however, of the old man, was quite convinced that, having once expressed his intention, nothing would drive him from it; and, seeing him about to rise with the most determined compression of the lips, he kindly resolved to prevent his putting upon his generous offer the aspect of a deed of obstinacy.

If, as Broadbrim said, St. John slept on the matter, and then came and declared his views unalterable, this would look like the conduct of a man open to reason, but acting upon principle; and, knowing this to be the character of this stern old man, he resolved his intended father-in-law should not appear to less advantage.

Anticipating the other in his rise, and acting on his authority as captain, he quickly gained his legs, and in a voice that overbore all competition, exclaimed—

"Now then, gentlemen, I dissolve this meeting. The hour is getting very late; you have all of you much yet to endure, and, as your captain, I have to beg that you will all seek what rest you can, that you may be able to render me good service whenever I am obliged to make such call upon you."

The general shuffle and assent that here arose drowned all further observation; and after looking fixedly on the table for a few minutes, old St. John shook his head slowly, and muttered the words,—

"No, certainly not."

Then, looking toward Nautila, rose, and led the way to the cabin.

Nautila looked towards Herbert.

In an instant, Herbert was at her side; and in the general confusion and universal chatter of the moment, our hero contrived, with that tact which is peculiar to lovers, to whisper half a hundred vows; then, drawing her arm within his own, they followed in the wake of old St. John.

Perilous as was the position of all on board, neither Nautila nor her devoted could help smiling at the almost idolatrous manner in which many of the passengers fell back at the approach of the old man—that curious old man who talked of himself as "an obscure individual,"—obscure, too, among the inhabitants of two countries, America and England, the former of which recognizes no standard but that of wealth, and the latter of which venerates no virtue without it!

Obscure! faith!—amongst such races of the human family, while he talked of resigning seventy-five thousand pounds in gold with more indifference than one farmer would use in bestowing a cart-load of manure on another!

When Herbert beheld this humiliating deference paid to the *millionaire*, he could not help recalling, in his contempt for his own species, the utter *nonchalance* with which he had seen most of the same people elbowing about the same old man on the first night of their putting to sea, before they knew him to be the possessor of those riches which formed the talisman to their favour and affections; and yet muttered he—

"Fools and idiots that ye are, would all his seventy-five thousand pounds, if you could each of you have possessed it ten times over, have availed to save you from foundering to the bottom of the ocean, if some one had not chanced to replace the loss of your captain, and recalled the crew to a sense of their duty in struggling on? Nay, much more, is it not this very possession of this accursed gold which has brought the ship into her present position? and which, by a single hair, suspends the sword of Damocles over the heads of all of us? And yet you are as ready now to fall down and worship the golden calf as if you still stood upon the solid plain, possessed of an endless lease of years, to pursue your favourite worship of Mammon."

Here, to recall him from his fit of disgust, they arrived at the door of Nautila's cabin. Herbert once again pressed her rosy fingers to his lips, and, with a deepdrawn sigh and a foreboding heart, murmured his adieu.

CHAPTER I.

"I'm for raising the jovial crew."

JAMES SMITH.

"WHY, Herbert, my boy, what a devil of a time you have been jawing in the cabin! one would think by this time you had all of you stumped your tongues up—regularly to the roots. But that's always the way with those old fogies when they once get their jawing tackles on board; Old Nick himself would stand but a poor chance with them. Well, what have they resolved on?—are we to carry that fore cabin by storm in the grey of the morning?"

Scarcely had Herbert time to reply to all these queries, which Symonds poured upon him the moment he gained the deck, after the breaking-up of the council of war, when Ebenezer Wire made his appearance for the first time, and hearing the query that was put, burst forth into a reply with all the vehemence that he had exhibited below.

"Tarnation no, I reckon! You talk like a man, you do; your discourse has the smack of something like courage in it, that's what it has, and that's just what I approve of, that's what I do."

Here the loud tones which this worthy indulged in instantly attracted round him, not only Symonds, but his junior volunteers; and in the midst of the party stood the gaunt-like figure of old Ebenezer. At the word courage, he drew up to its full height his scarecrow figure, and as if that was not sufficiently alarming to the clouds, he raised above his head his skeleton-like arm, stretching out all his fingers, as if he intended to catch one of Mother Carey's chickens, which were constantly flying by.

Scarcely, however, had he got the word courage from his lips, when a bright light flashed along the quarter-deck from forward, and a report of firearms was simultaneously heard.

"What's that?" shrieked Ebenezer, almost before the echoes of the loud sounds had died away. "But I need not ask," quoth

he, stamping as if in the greatest agony, and clasping, with desperate gripe, the wrist of his right arm with his left hand; "it's one of them tarnation destroyers of all fair play. It's one of them infarnal rifles, that's what it is! Oh, my precious arm! I'm desperate hard hit there, that's what I am! Oh, where's the surgeon? Oh, let me get down at him, or I shall bleed to death, that's what I shall!"

"Fiddlestick, man!" said the brigadier; "bleed to a plum-pudding, you mean! Death wouldn't look at such a wretched carcase as yours! Why, I understood you to be a man of valour, one after my own heart, just now. What the devil are you running below for?—a mere rifle scratch in one of your arms will do you no harm! You had much better stand still on deck, and take aim with me against the vagabonds who have hit you."

"Another time, brigadier, another time. Oh, my precious arm!" roared Ebenezer, struggling hard to get away. "I'll give it them when I catch 'em; the bowie-knife is my weapon, that's what it is! But I hate them rifles that hit a man from a distance; they are cowardly weapons they are, that's what they are!" and yelping with pain, down ran Ebenezer to the surgeon below.

"By the Lord of Innisfail, if the rifle is a cowardly weapon, never was there a body more formed to use it than your father's son, Ebenezer," roared the brigadier, looking down the companion after the retreating figure of the gasconado, who, however, did not think it worth his while to turn about and refute the calumny. Then turning to Herbert, "The dirty cannibal! to talk of the bowie-knife as a weapon at all, when it's quite clear that no gentleman would fight with it unless he entertained the most solemn intention to eat his enemy after he had killed him, with or without roasting, as his predilections might dictate. Now, boys, you see how those vermin forward receive any little lenity on our side, the ungrateful vagabonds! so keep up a smart fire on them, and let nothing but a want of ammunition stop you. And now then, Herbert, since we can get a little peace, draw aside here under cover, and tell me what sort of a result this precious council of yours has ended in, after all. Man alive, I had great misgivings after you were gone as to how far you would be able, alone and unsupported as you were, to keep those old fogies up to the proper point of service-pitch. But there, you see I couldn't help it; unfortunately, I confess, I have not yet learnt the art of being in two places at once. In fact, I cannot be everywhere, boy, so you must take the will for the deed."

"I do," said Herbert, "and am very grateful to you, brigadier, for all your exertions."

"Don't mention it, sir; give me but the post of danger, and I'll make it the post of honour. And now, that's a dear fellow, do tell me what you have resolved on below?"

Here Herbert entered into a full detail; but when the brigadier

understood that a passive line of action was to be adopted, his anger knew no bounds. The quaker was a trump, and St. John an absolute lunatic, who ought certainly to be placed under instant personal restraint. In this, however, he fully agreed with Herbert, that immediate steps must be taken to guard the quarter-deck in some manner from the raking fire of the caboose, to which it would be doubtly exposed as soon as ever the day dawned sufficiently to reveal the persons of the officers walking on it.

"I tell you it is impossible to do it," replied the brigadier; "how can you throw a breastwork across the quarter-deck sufficiently high to protect the persons of those who are steering and keeping watch behind us? You can't do it, sir; you have no materials, take my word for it. You mark what follows, and see whether, when day dawns, and you pursue what you call a passive and humane course, if we are not picked off here on the quarter-deck one after the other in the course of a few hours. At present, our firing keeps them in check; I see how that is, plain enough. They run rather short of ammunition, and, like knowing scoundrels as they are, have resolved not to waste it unless we make it worth their while by offering them a good mark. That you saw just now by the ready mode in which they touched off Mr. Ebenezer, the boasting varlet; but as soon as we show our noses to them fairly, they will give us something to sniff at, depend upon it: it's a perfect suicide to think of sparing those scoundrels, and the quaker was the only man among you at the council of peace, as he calls it, that really knew what he is about. Make a breastwork, friend! you can't do it."

"I could do it in a moment," said Herbert, "if this outbreak had taken place during the day instead of the night, for then we should have been able to have got a row of hammocks."

"Ay, my boy, and if the mutineers hadn't been on board, you wouldn't have cared for a mutiny, I suppose; but this you see is one of those unfortunate cases where the ifs won't come boldly into our service as we could wish them, so you must just deal with the case as you find it. It isn't day, and you can't have the hammocks, and that's all about them. I'll tell you what will do quite as well: here are these quarter-boats."

"By Jove, that's a good thought! We will swing them in-board, and unhook them from their tackles, and launch them athwartships, fill each of them with a good load of coal well piled up and covered with tarpaulins to prevent its rolling about the decks, and, if their rifle bullets can penetrate through that, they are welcome."

"And that's what you call a clever plan, is it?"

"Why, really, upon my word, I think it is."

"Oh, Herbert, Herbert, I'm astonished at you! From a commander too—a man that we are all looking to! You may put your boats there, perhaps, under cover of a good sharp fire; I'll not deny but what that may be effected. But how will you fill

them with coal in the face of those dogs and their rifle muzzles overlooking you all the time, seeing that the coal is kept just under their noses."

"True, I forgot that," said Herbert; "then that won't do; yet we might fill it with sand, but no, that's open to the same objection. I'll tell you what, however, is quite in our power, and would answer our purpose equally well; we'll call up some hands from below from among the passengers, and while you and your guard protect us by keeping your eye upon the enemy's movements, I, assisted by them, will get the boats into a position, and, that done, we will turn all the gentlemen out from their berths below, and stuff the two cutters full of mattresses, then, by lashing these two deep on one side of the boats, it will be quite protection enough against a bullet, and form a very snug line for your party to lay and fire over."

"Like shooting at wild ducks," said the brigadier with a grim smile; and then, as if he felt grievously offended at any mode that was likely to support what he called the infernal folly of half measures, after appearing some time to consider Herbert's proposition, he replied, with a significant shrug of the shoulders, "You certainly may make something of a barricade in the way you mention, but give me a good storming party for my money. There is only one method that I know of preventing an enemy from being troublesome, and that is to have him in your own possession, dead or alive. However, no matter, those that live long enough will see what comes of it; only, do me the justice to remember my protest is strong against the whole of it. Then, am I to understand that I am to keep my party still firing on that riddled caboose head, that looks as much like a cullender turned topsy-turvy as anything else, while you get the boats into line?"

"Precisely the very thing that I want; and after that you shall be relieved, and go down and turn in, while somebody else undertakes, in your absence, to keep the foe well peppered."

"Oh, sorra the turn in I want, unless it is for leave to turn among them vagabonds forward, and undertake to give them a little moral instruction for the course of five minutes! But as it seems I can't even be obliged in that little trifle, why, no matter; go your way, get your boats in, and let's see what sort of a thing you can make of it, though I can't say I approve of the line of action they have adopted. Yet, still, you may rely on the best assistance in my power all the same. Ay, there the vagabonds are firing again. You see what a perpetual eyesore it is under a gentleman's nose, and yet a man ain't to be allowed to open his mouth and have a snap at them. It is too bad—by my honour it is; but I suppose it must be borne. Oh, my young boys, if I only had the sole command here for half an hour for your sake!" and the brigadier, angrily shaking his fists at them, walked forward to his post.

CHAPTER LI.

“Out on ye, owls! nothing but songs of death.”

Richard III.

As soon as Herbert had got rid of the somewhat troublesome task of reconciling the brigadier to defensive measures, he hurried down below, and going to the bedside of Broadbrim, who was sleeping soundly, begged him to return on deck, and give the powerful assistance of his strong arms in erecting a barricade.

“Very well, my friend, I will be with thee in a moment,” said the man of peace, springing from his cot without any second summons, and at once proceeding quietly and rapidly to array himself. From the cot of this admirable ally our hero passed on to the sleeping-berths of several others, and having in a few minutes gathered six hands ready to assist him, they at once went on deck, and commenced their operations. The boats which they desired to use were those commonly called cutters, and hung one on each side of the quarter-deck.

“Now, Broadbrim,” said our hero, “what we want to do is to swing those fellows inboard, and place them one on each side, with their broadside presented to the enemies’ shot; you, being a good stout fellow, we shall call upon you presently, when the tustle comes, to help us to pull them in; and, in the meanwhile, just come aft here and take the wheel, for the helmsman being the only seaman we possess, I shall want his assistance to cast loose the fastenings of the boats.”

“Anything, friend, to be useful, provided it be neither pitch and toss nor manslaughter,” quoth the quaker; and, going to the helm with Herbert, he was speedily instructed how to guide the ship by the little pocket compass that had already proved so useful, as was generally supposed, though Herbert was not without some misgivings that it was not sufficiently correct to be relied upon.

“You are the man to get through difficulties,” exclaimed Herbert gaily, to his friend, as he remarked the readiness with which he gave himself up to an employment which must have been totally new to him.

“Why, friend Herbert,” said the quaker, firmly, “the way to overcome difficulties I learned in my youth, and that is to forbear from making them.”

Herbert was just going to utter some reply, when a flash was

again observed across the decks of the steamer, the report of which, from its sounding forward in the bows, bespoke it to come from the mutineers, and in the next moment our hero fell bleeding and senseless to the deck.

"Art thou hurt? art thou hurt, friend Herbert?" kindly and anxiously inquired the worthy man of peace. But no answer from him whom he addressed brought consolation to the troubled soul of the speaker.

In an instant several of the passengers who had seen him fall turned round.

"Alack! alack!" said Broadbrim, "if they have numbered thy days for thee, then is our tribulation indeed brought to its climax; and this thou owest to thy own mistaken lenity," continued the worthy man, leaning on the deck, and supporting Herbert's temples against his shoulder, chafing his hands and otherwise exhibiting marks of the tenderest solicitude. "He's dead; I fear me, he's dead," continued he, seeing that all his efforts to attract a reply were apparently vain.

"Dead! who's dead?" said the brigadier, rushing up. "By the Lord of Innisfail!" he added, throwing himself also on his knees beside the quaker, my gallant friend, is it you? Haven't I been telling you that it would come to something like this! and have they hit you at last! Oh! wirra! what could induce you to let those pottering old fogies persuade you out of your seven senses, as if there ever was or ever could be any remedy against a skulking enemy like smoking him out of his hole! Oh! if you had only let me carry the rascals by storming them, would this ever have happened, think you? Not it!—not it! And this comes, as it always does, of your half measures! Confusion confound them! And after all, the thing will yet have to be done before we get any peace from the vagabonds. And who'll tell the young lady what's come of it?

Totally overcome by this last reflection, the brigadier lifted his hands, and let them fall down by his side again. As he did so, a long trickling streak of blood drew his attention to the temple from which it issued.

"Shot through the head, by Jove! and it was only joking about duck-shooting we were not ten minutes since."

"Friend," said the quaker, here interposing, "I respect thee for thy grief; but, prithee, use some moderation in the exhibition of it, or else, hearing in how mortal a part they've wounded us, not only will the enemy rejoice over our calamities, but peradventure move to the attack again: if, therefore, thou wilt return to thy watch, we will bear below our slaughtered friend here, and take care that every precaution and tenderness is used in conveying the mournful intelligence to the lady of whom thou speakest, and who, by her beauty, gentleness, and worth, is well entitled to the warm regards of all on board."

"Faith, friend, I believe you are right as to the disposition

of our various duties. Trate him tenderly, though he is gone, poor fellow! to the land of dreams. We shall miss him dreadfully, that's all I have to say on the subject;" and the brigadier turned away to renew his fire once more upon the foe, who had inflicted so grievous a loss upon them, muttering as he went, "a grievous loss—and the more so by token that were I to be shot for deficiency of knowledge on such a material point, it's little I know where myself will have to turn to now for accommodation in one or two little matters when the ship arrives in England; though, faith, for the matter of that, if those vagabonds forward there are to be allowed to go on firing in this way, in the course of the next few balls or so they may relieve my mind from all apprehension on that subject, as fully as they have that of my poor friend Herbert."

By this time our hero had been carried down into the cabin, and laid on his own berth-place. The surgeon was quietly and speedily summoned; and, after a few minutes' careful examination, declared to the inexpressible joy of all around, "that he could find no wound of more importance than a severe graze on the top of the skull, which, as it did not appear to have fractured the bone, would, not, he apprehended, prove of further importance than the temporary stunning effects which it had already produced." This prognosis he amply verified by the application of ammonia to the nostrils, which speedily enabled Herbert once more to open his eyes upon his attendants.

"Friend, thou hast indeed had a narrow escape," said the quaker, pressing the palm of Herbert, who was gazing round him with the evident surprise of a man unable to define what might have happened, or what is his position.

This was soon explained; and Herbert, who declared himself perfectly unhurt, wished instantly to arise and return to the quarter-deck, where the necessity of getting up some protection from the fire of the mutineers before the rapidly-approaching break of day, was now imminent.

"Friend, thou must not, and thou shalt not, move for at least an hour," said the quaker. "Here stands thy leech; he will tell thee that I only say that which he sanctions."

"I think, sir," said the surgeon, "if it be at all possible to postpone going on deck to your duties for another hour, you should endeavour to do so. Nature is a chirurgeon always on the alert, and only requiring time and repose for her ablest cures. Though you may not at present feel any ill effects beyond a sort of stupor, still if you go on deck and excite yourself afresh, some mischief, now latent, and of which we cannot be cognisant, because we cannot see through its bony covering, may exist about the membranes of the brain, and, by premature action of the vessels, grow into serious mischief. Repose, repose, sir, depend upon it, is the best course you can pursue."

"Under ordinary circumstances, doctor, I would follow your

advice, which I have no doubt is excellent ; but, under the present emergencies of the case, such a careful protecting of my own person against a fancied harm might be the cause of actual death to many ; if the day breaks, and exposes the quarter-deck to the fire of those rascals, I fear your hands would be fuller of employment than either of us could wish, and most of them, no doubt, beyond your help. You see, therefore, that time is an important matter in every point of view. Come, neighbour Broadbrim, you promised me your assistance. Come along, and let us make a barricade."

"Rest a moment, friend, and I'll consider the matter. Perhaps now thou wilt see the advisability of foregoing what friend Symonds terms half measures ; and if thou determinest at once to storm the stronghold of these rebellious children of Belial, barricading will no longer be necessary."

"I tell you, Broadbrim, both you and the brigadier fearfully underrate the dangers and difficulties of the task. You don't seem to reflect that a determined set of scoundrels like those with whom we have to deal might make a resistance which we should perhaps be wholly unable to overcome, and which, even if we did surmount it, would cost us the lives of six or seven of our party. Now the question is, are you prepared to advise such a sacrifice?"

"Not if we can keep the six or seven alive, friend. But supposing, instead of losing six or seven by storming the fore cabin, we lose nine or ten by refraining from so doing, how then?"

"Why, as to that, that's impossible, Broadbrim."

"Was it impossible, friend, that that shot might have proved thy last either to give or receive? At any rate, thou must admit that had that bullet gone three hairs'-breadth further to the right, thou wouldst never more have been troubled with matters of this world ; and how can thou take upon thyself to answer that many may not meet their fate in the same way before the day closes? But if thou art determined to go on deck, and pursue this course, I will not oppose thee ; only rest a few moments before starting."

The quaker here suddenly left our hero's cabin, and in a few minutes returned, followed by Mr. St. John, when, somehow or other, the look of the worthy quaker was not altogether of the most agreeable species, even though he did bring with him so potent an auxiliary.

"I am sorry to hear you have been wounded," said the old man, making a most formal bow to Herbert, much to the chagrin of the latter.

"You can scarcely call it wounded, sir ; it was only a tap on the head," gaily replied our hero.

"I am glad of it," said the other ; "but, whether slight or severe, I am still more concerned to hear that you meditate yet further resistance to these misguided men, notwithstanding I have declared my utter indifference about the money which they desire to possess, and am perfectly willing to surrender it. Therefore,

I beg you will not risk your own life, nor that of the other gentlemen who are passengers in the ship, in any protracted defence for me, or any thing that I possess on board. My mind is unalterably made up, and was so at the moment I spoke. As soon as the morning dawns I shall find some opportunity of informing the mutineers that they may take the money and depart, and welcome. Whoever, therefore, is slain or wounded before that, throws his blood upon the waters. You have been elected by the passengers and crew to act as captain. It is my duty as such to give you warning of my intentions, and I beg you will not allow any hot-blooded young men under your command or authority to incur the least possible danger in defence of treasure which has already gone from my possession, since I am determined that nothing shall prevent my parting with it."

"But you forget, sir," replied Herbert, "that I am only acting as captain under the sanction of the other gentlemen on board; that they all decided that on public principles alone it was necessary to defend the ship."

"Act as you please, sir," said the old man. "I have told you what are my intentions, and you know what are my wishes. Nothing is more abhorrent to me than to persist in such a strife for such an object; and as to public principles, founded on the mere selfishness of society, you well know that no man has so thorough a contempt for all that kind of jargon as myself. Now, sir, you are in possession of my sentiments; act as you please."

Mr. St. John was about to leave the cabin, but Herbert, detaining him, begged the quaker to leave them for a few minutes alone. Broadbrim and the surgeon retired accordingly, closing the door. When they were gone, Herbert addressed the father, saying,—

"You have urged this matter of non-resistance on me very forcibly, Mr. St. John. If I comply with your request, will you grant me a favour that I wish to ask?"

"That depends very much, sir upon what it is. State it."

"Will you," said Herbert, looking down bashfully on the ground and crimsoning to the temples as he spoke, "forgive the offence of which I have been guilty towards you, and renew your consent to my marriage with Miss St. John?"

"I thought, sir, you had known me better than to make such a request," immovably returned the other.

"Why, sir?"

"Because, in the first place, you know that when I have once come to a decision I never alter it, and in the next place I should have hoped you would have considered me the last man likely to bribe another to guide his public conduct from private motives. You are now acting on board as captain: all that you do ought to be done on public grounds. It would not, therefore, raise my estimation of you to son-in-law pitch to think that you are capable

of being able to mould your actions from the poor consideration of a private bribe."

Herbert at this reply certainly felt himself grossly aggrieved.

"I should have thought, sir," said he, in answer to the bitter sarcasm, "after all that has happened to us both since we last started, you would hardly have deemed such harshness towards me either fair or honourable on your part."

A frown passed over the old man's features at this reply, and then he seemed in a moment to relax, as if he seemed fully aware that he had dealt a hard measure back to one to whom he owed much kindness. For a moment he seemed about to relax, and something like an emotion of pity played round the iron outline of his mouth. It was, however, but for a moment that such a weakness existed, if at all. Some other and far different line of reasoning then appeared to present itself; and, returning Herbert's complaint by a cold and distant salute, he merely replied,—

"I grieve, sir, I have not the happiness of meeting your approbation," and then instantly withdrew.

CHAPTER LII.

"Let no one think to fly the danger,
Sooner or later love is his own avenger."

BYRON.

THOSE only who have suffered under the agonies of disappointed love can appreciate the bitter feelings that raged within Herbert's bosom, as he watched the departure of the old man from his presence.

"A cruel, unkind, remorseless nature he appears to possess when once roused to anger," said Herbert, "and this too after the services which I fondly hoped I had been the means of rendering him! Such is always the way; nothing seems certain in this life but vexation; and of that, God knows, there is always plenty to spare. Life! talk of the value of life!—and not risking it against those infernal scoundrels forward! What is the use of possessing life? Why is one burdened with it, if the first indiscretion high spirits may prompt is to be a matter of endless reproach and unforgiving persecution? and then, when he sees a few scoundrels in arms to beggar him, his inconsistent soul is full of mercy and tenderness; everything is to be given up to their rapacity, and they are not even to be punished for their villany. At any rate, I'll disappoint him there. I'll rush on deck, risk or no risk, fling all danger to the winds, and let life go with it, if it will, as a miserable burden not worth having at the best."

In an instant on went Herbert's cap, and away he dashed on deck, determined to bring the conspirators to condign punishment, whatever the consequences might be. That his resolves were founded upon rash and inadequate grounds we must admit; but that it was most natural that such should be his feelings we cannot deny also.

"Heigh, there, neighbour Broadbrim," cried he, shouting to the quaker, "if you have any mind for fun, come and lend a hand. I have determined to go to the utmost extent with these precious rascals, and stand no nonsense with any of them. Come up on deck with you, and help to get the boats in."

"Thou art a rash youth, friend," rejoined the quaker; "but I will not see thee evil entreated without some support. Lead on."

"That's right, thou art a hearty codger; who shall say no?"

"Heigh, there! Symonds, my boy, here we come alive and

heartily: keep up a smart fire on the caboose. Roberts, come aft from the wheel, and give the steerage up to this quaker gentleman. That's right; now jump into the quarter-boat, and get her ready for swinging-in on board. Stand under cover from the enemy's fire. Forward, gallant volunteers, all of you; and you, Roberts, see if you can't be too nimble to let the rascals have a slap at you."

"Ay, ay, sir," replied Roberts; "I will do my best; and when I sing out—'all ready,' you catch the lanyard that I throw to you, and pull the boat round inboard."

"Ay, ay," said Herbert.

Then, turning to the brigadier, he added—"Now, Symonds, my boy, look out to keep up a sharp fire—a regular *feu de joie*."

"In honour of your recovery," returned the brigadier.

"Dickenson, my hearty," said Herbert, giving instructions to a young man who had volunteered from among the passengers—"do you run below and turn out of their beds half a dozen of the crustiest old files you can lay your hands on, and bring me up their mattresses; we must pop them into the boat the very first opportunity, or else some of us will get hit through her sides, and splinter-wounds are among the ugliest a man can receive on board a ship. Up with them quickly, and take no excuse about their turning out. If they make any grumbling, give them a hint that the mutineers are at hand with their bowie-knives—*Vi et armis*—bring me up the bedding."

"Trust me for that, sir," said the youngster, darting below. "I know two or three among the passengers who will like no better sport. I suppose you don't want the ladies' beds as well, sir, do you? because *that* would be the fun."

"No, you young vagabond! be off; start, and learn to leave the fair ones alone."

The young man quickly disappeared, and in a few minutes a most direful growling and grunting was heard below. That which had been a mere jest on the part of Herbert the young wag converted into a reality. Gathering round him several spirits more wicked than himself, every antique passenger that they could call to mind as having a crabbed countenance, or as having indulged in any unpopular remarks, as having shown any inclination to take the best bits to himself at dinner, or having hesitated to carve that fowl or cut up this duck, or hold his neighbour's plate, or as having kept a paper or magazine too long in hand, or sat before the fire to the exclusion of others, or having emptied the milk-jug, or indeed as having been guilty of making himself in any other way obnoxious to these young spirits, was immediately served with notice to quit his warm and comfortable bed, and give up his mattress for the use of the state. To all who were at all rebellious, a short pithy piece of advice was given them—to get

their throats in readiness, for the mutineers might probably be arriving presently to accomplish their projected kindness of cutting them a little deeper than their beards.

In most instances this intimation, given with no particularly excessive delicacy, generally sufficed to dispel all wish for sleep; and by one means or another, in a few minutes, a number of beds were crowded together in the companion-hatchway for the purpose required.

"Ah! Dickenson, my boy, that's right, hold back a minute, till you see the cutter fairly inboard, and then stand by, you and your companions, to hand the beds up to us as fast as ever you can pitch them. Holloa there, Roberts! have you got all ready there in the cutter?"

"In half a minute, sir. Will you look out for the rope's-end?—here it comes, sir."

"Throw away, I'll catch. Take your time, Roberts, you're quite out of the mutineers' fire where you stand."

"Yes, I'm ready, heave away. Now then, brigadier, look sharp, keep up your briskest fire; we are coming out from our cover to swing the cutter inboard."

As Herbert concluded these preparatory warnings, the seaman threw him from the boat a lanyard, the other end of which was made fast to the head of the iron davit, from two of which the boat depended over the sea.

"Now, my boys," cried our hero, catching this, and handing it to the young men who stood round him, some of them under the lee of the companion, some of them covered by the mast, and all of them kneeling, sitting, or lying on the deck, to protect them as much as possible from their opponents' fire. In a few seconds each of them had caught hold of the lanyard or guy, and waited for the command to pull.

"Steady lads, steady," said Herbert; "wait till I give you the words—one, two, three, and then at the third, pull all together. Now have you all got hold?"

"Yes! yes! all of us."

"Now then—one, two, three—pull!"

Uniting their whole strength, there came such a sudden surge upon the rope, that some of the party lost their balance and rolled over, while the bent iron davit, yielding to the rigorous demand made upon it, turned suddenly round with a discordant screech on its rusty pivot, and brought the bow of the cutter inboard, while the davit of the stern remained, as it had been before, pointing overboard.

"Now, Roberts, look to yourself; remember the bows of the cutter are within range of the forecastle. Keep in the stern of the boat, and lie down as soon as you have thrown us the guy, and you will then be as safe as you can make yourself."

"And that's no great things to boast," interposed the brigadier.

"Every dog must have his day," rejoined Herbert, determined to let no discouragement gain ground.

"Ready inboard there for the guy?" demanded Roberts.

"All ready," answered our hero; and, catching it as it was thrown to him, they all applied once more, the second davit swung round still more swiftly than the first, and the cutter now fairly impended over the quarter-deck.

"Now, Roberts, you lower yourself down; but stern first, mind, or those murderous dogs ahead will catch sight of you."

"Ay, ay," replied the seaman, "lower away it is."

The noise of the cutter's fall was then heard, as it reeved through the blocks, for by this name "fall" the rope is termed; and then there came the heavy sound of her keel as it descended on the steamer's quarter-deck.

"All right, Roberts; now lower away in the bow."

"Ay, ay, sir," responded the seaman.

The noise of the running rope was again heard, and down came the bow-part of the keel also upon the deck.

"Well done, Roberts, my boy! Now then, Dickenson, are you and your lads ready with the mattresses?"

"All ready, sir."

"Then, Roberts, quick, jump out."

At the time that this order was given, the day had just fairly broken. The sun had not yet shown the upper ridge of his disc beyond the threatening horizon, although it wanted but a very few minutes of that period when the glorious orb would rise. This point of light was broad upon the steamer's starboard-quarter. The deep blue ocean, the waves of which still ran with great height and strength, as if not yet recovered from the fury into which they had been vexed by the terrific gale of the previous day—one after another came on at slow long intervals, each mass of water looking more threatening than another, and most of them, as they rushed by, exchanging their dark blue ridges for a sudden burst of foam, giving to the curious fancy of the beholder the image of huge monsters, compelled in harmless wrath to pass by some object which they longed to make their victim, and gnashing their teeth in impotent and foaming malice to find themselves disappointed of their prey. The storm having subsided into a strong fitful gale, swept by in a continual roar, now heightened almost into a squall, and then appearing to pause in comparative moderation, while the steamer descended down into the troughs of the sea, only to howl with greater violence when she rose to the next summit.

In straight and unwavering lines the rays of light darted from the point behind which the sun was gradually toiling upward; and everywhere they discovered dark heavy masses of threatening clouds, pile upon pile, mass after mass, darting along beneath the obscure heavens, before the breath of the yet unsatiated tempest.

What a speck that gigantic steamer, as man had termed her—what a speck she seemed upon the angry and treacherous bosom of the element it was her boast to master! And, while the whole face of Nature thus appeared to scowl upon her and her crew, while not a single dot of sail could be discovered in any portion of the horizon, to render the dreadful desert of the ocean less solitary, and everything around seemed to threaten the darkest issue to her voyage, man, not content with all the ill that Fate could pour upon him, still strove with murderous weapon and ensanguined arm to aggravate the horrors of the sea!

“And for what purpose?” muttered Herbert, as his eye quickly scanned the mighty spectacle around him, so sublime in its aspect, and so terrible in the threatening lesson it conveyed; “and for what purpose? well may it be asked! To obtain some few score pieces of a peculiar kind of ore, of no possible use to its possessors here, and which, unless the weather moderates, we may none of us, perhaps, live to transport elsewhere.”

These thoughts, though they take some space to describe and read, passed through the mind that dwelt on them with instantaneous rapidity; and at the same time that he was musing on this subject, Herbert gave to Roberts the order we have heard to jump out of the boat. Little did he imagine how that order would be obeyed. The words were yet in the act of utterance, when rap, rap, went the crack of three separate rifles from different parts of the forecastle. The steamer on the instant before had laboured up the crest of a huge sea, paused slightly on its summit, and then, with one of those constant dashes that seemed to shake her whole frame from stem to stern, darted down once more into the yawning abyss of waters beneath.

In this position, therefore, the quarter-deck, which was much higher than the forecastle, became wholly exposed to any men who might be planted on the ladder; and, when the sounds of the three consecutive rifles were heard, the rapidly-dawning day caused the flashes from their muzzles to be lost in the general light. Three small wreaths of smoke, however, arose from three different spots, and broke, upon the astonished mind of all beholders among our friends, the startling intelligence that by some extraordinary means or other the mutineers had contrived to evade both the watch and the muzzles of Symonds, and spread themselves out on the forecastle in skirmishing order. This was direful intelligence, and would scarcely have been believed, but for the melancholy corroboration that it carried with it. Scarcely had the first circle of the first wreath of smoke been borne away before the blast, when Roberts, as if in obedience to Herbert's order, sprang up from the cutter several feet high in the air, and fell a lifeless and breathless corpse not one yard from Herbert's feet, and shot through the heart. The same moment one of Symonds's volunteers, who had been loading his rifle, had the bones of his arm completely shattered by another bullet.

"By this and by that, this is too warm to last long," cried Symonds, whom no amount of hard knocks seemed to disturb from his equanimity.

Herbert, who felt quite horrified at Roberts's fate, and greatly taken aback at the escapade of the mutineers, was about to give some order to carry the seaman below, when the brigadier's voice called him to a sterner occupation.

CHAPTER LIII.

"Cheerly on, courageous friends,
To reap the harvest of a lasting peace,
Or fame more lasting from a well-fought war."

SHAKESPEARE.

"HERBERT! Rollins! Broadbrim! St. John! Stand to your guns! here come the mutineers, full charge. Steady now, boys, steady! don't be in a hurry to fire at them; cover your men well with the ends of your rifles, and let the first glimpse you take of the whites of their eyes be the last. Here they come; I'll take their leader with the red cap. Rollins, you take the boy in the check shirt—and old England for ever! Dickenson, pull every mattress quickly, my boy, down out of the companion-ladder, run below, and tell all our friends to come to our support; the mutineers are coming to the charge. Fly!—fly!"

"Down with the scoundrels! spare neither man, woman, nor child," shouted Boston Bill on the other side, flourishing his long, keen knife, that glistened in the morning air with a polished effulgence, that made still more terrible, if such a thing be possible, his blood-stained and threatening form, his ferocious and wounded countenance, on which a whole and frightful congeries of cuts were visible on the left side of his face, while the eye above was black, green, blue, and yellow, from the severe contusion of Herbert's night-glass. The ball of the eye itself seemed a complete mass of blood, and glared on those who stood on the quarter-deck more like the devouring orb of a wild tiger than of a human being.

"Oh! you're a precious beauty, you are, Master Redcap," roared the brigadier," as he peeped out at him along the barrel of his rifle upon the approaching bravo from behind the cover of the

mast. "By the Lord of Innisfail, if I wait till I see the white of your left eye, the Greek Kalends will be coming past long ago! Come along, pop and skip a little faster," he added, as the steamer once more plunged, roaring down the declivity of a vast sea; and the mutineers, though desperately striving to rush forward, found themselves, for an instant, wholly unable to struggle against the tremendous surge of the ship.

"Oh! you landlubbers," continued the brigadier, in his taunting manner, which he knew, from old experience, to give so much confidence to the inferiors of a commander who, at such a moment, could be cool enough and lighthearted enough to employ such insulting railery; "where, I say, you lubbers, is your friend Yankee Doodle this blessed morning?—isn't he among you? Oh! then, why didn't some of you borrow his sea-legs of him before quaker Broadbrim threw him down into the furnace-room, like a sack of coals, to feed the engine? That's right, come on, my boys, we're ready;" then adding, in a lower voice, "now Rollins, now Joyce, now you may see the whites of their eyes—cover your men, and pitch it into them."

Swift at the word, crack—crack! went the rifles of the two volunteers, who had so ably fulfilled the orders of their leaders, and, with a compulsive cry of pain, down fell the hero in the check shirt, biting the dust of the deck for the last time, while a second of the mutineers, who was flourishing a tomahawk, dropped it from his right hand, which drooped powerless by his side, and he was fain to pick up the weapon with his left; but, conscious how inadequate this was to do the duty of the former, he resigned his post as the foremost and lagged wofully in the rear.

"Now, friend Herbert, where are these men of Gath?" exclaimed the stout quaker, as, with the gravity and precision that characterized all his movements, he stepped out upon the quarter-deck, just as if he were about to take his accustomed morning air before breakfast. Luckily for the Society of Friends, the steamer was at this moment ploughing her way up the huge valley of blue sea, into which, the moment before, she had shot down; by reason of which position the quarter-deck was comparatively hid, for no sooner was the reinforcement of the passengers seen to issue from the saloon than once more the three ominous wreaths of blue vapour arose with a sharp, sudden fire from as many points in the bow, and once more the air whistled to the rifle bullets.

"Thy enemies, friend, are especial good customers to all hatters," said Broadbrim, directing his eye toward a hole just made at the top of the crown, stepping aside to let those behind him issue forth, and giving this premonitory caution to those below—"Take care, friends, how you come on deck, for guns in the prow are more plentiful than well-wishers this morning." Then, casting his eyes about him, he coolly, but with tremendous strength, tore from its place a double-armed oak bench, capable of holding three people,

and which had been secured by screws and lashes against the framing of the saloon skylight. In the mean time, the alteration in the ship's position, which, in all probability, saved the life of Broadbrim, enabled the mutineers to regain lost ground, and rush down with redoubled force and fury full upon the quarter-deck, Boston Bill, as before, leading them on, and cheering and exulting in the immunity which seemed to protect his person.

"Come on, my boys, come on—we have the scoundrels now! In with your knives—in with them to the very hilts in their heart's blood!"

"Don't you wish you may get it?" roared the brigadier, who up to this moment, through every twist and turning, every pause, run, or stagger, of Boston Bill's advance, had never ceased, with his rifle, to cover the centre of their gentle leader's bosom. Already had the sanguinary monster approached within two feet of the quarter-deck ladder, his right arm bared to the shoulder, brandishing his bowie-knife, his left extended to grasp the rail of the ladder, when Symonds, cool, as if pointing to a raw recruit's dirty cross-belt, lifted slightly the arm of his piece from the centre of Boston's breast to the point of his ruddy nose, now close within a few yards of the perilous muzzle. With an aim that Symonds thought unfailing, he pulled the trigger. True to the motion, off went the contents of the barrel, and full in advance of all his brother scoundrels, the ringleader came to just such a dead halt as some runaway horse might make upon the brink of a terrific precipice. For a moment his arms tossed wildly in the air on either side; he staggered back a few paces, backing upon his comrades, as if endeavouring to find a steady footing, and, opening his huge mouth, a howl of most intense pain burst forth, accompanied by streams of blood, that chased each other down the sides of his hairy jaws, and flooded his bare breast.

For a moment the spectacle that he presented riveted all eyes. Every one thought he was killed. Those on Herbert's side, with a mistaken but chivalrous feeling, forbore to inflict further pain on one who seemed already to have received his death-blow; and those of his own party appeared to be at once panic-stricken at the loss of their remorseless leader. All were, however, disappointed. The brigadier's change of aim had unfortunately defeated his object. Whether from the motion of the ship, or some movement of the mutineer's head, is immaterial; instead of the ball taking effect, as Symonds intended, between the eyes of the ringleader, it struck on one side of the mark, and slightly below, namely, on the right canine tooth, which it shivered to atoms; and then, passing up along the jaw, struck out several of the double teeth, and lodged in the fleshy part of the right cheek, thus dividing a whole host of small nerves and arteries. The pain inflicted was most intense, and the hæmorrhage considerable; but the heart to will, and the mind to execute evil, still remained.

Darting forward with a furious bound, such as the wounded and tortured rhinoceros may be supposed to make, something between a howl and a cheer burst from the bleeding lips of the desperate man. He waved his knife to those around him, fired by his recovery, and burning to revenge his sufferings. They thronged at his back—his left hand grasped the rail—he planted his right foot on the quarter-deck ladder with a strength that made the stout oak tremble beneath him, and spitting forth the most dreadful curses, while the blood gurgled from his mouth, his keen and dreadful blade pointed full at the throat of Symonds. Undeterred by the revolting aspect of this fearful creature, who wore, in the eyes of all beholders, the most perfect aspect of a demon that human shape could bear, Symonds, with a careless, *nonchalant* air, coolly dropped the butt of his rifle to the ground, seized it by the muzzle, and crying out in his usual jocular tone,—

“Don’t be angry with me, my beauty!” swung the stock of his piece rapidly round his head, as if about to try and dash out upon the spot the brains of his antagonist.

The eye of Boston Bill saw the whirling of the weapon, and instinctively raising his right arm to catch the blow, the brigadier retreated a pace, dexterously changed the direction of his rifle, and coming on one side, and under the guard of the mutineer, instead of above it, succeeded in striking him once more upon the very spot which had been so dreadfully shattered by Herbert’s night-glass, not many hours before.

The effect was electrical: with scarcely an effort to save himself, beyond a vain clutching of the air with his left hand, and a faint attempt still to retain his vaunted knife in the left, Boston Bill at once fell back on the mass of his supporters.

“Now’s your time, my boys, pour in a volley!” cried Symonds, suiting the action to the word, and bringing down his man—rap, crack!—crack,—rap! sounded the reports, right and left, from the passengers on the quarter-deck, followed by as many cries from the struggling ruffians in the waist—and too fatally answered by the three concealed marksmen on the fore-castle, who, having cunningly waited for their opportunity, when the passengers were thronging forward to complete their victory, now poured in a well-directed volley.

Poor Rollins, who had so faithfully and well obeyed the instructions of the brigadier, and, over-excited by the contest, was burning to distinguish himself, had already shot one of the rebels, and now, with his maiden sword, was rushing to cut down a second of the ruffians then trying to force his passage to the quarter-deck. Full between the dark and curled moustache he had often taken such pride in cultivating passed, from one of the mutineer’s rifles, the small, but fatal leaden pellet that glanced upward through the floor of the brain. With smiles of enthusiasm still upon his hand-

some features, his person scarcely disfigured by his death-wound, he fell forward among the feet of his adversaries, utterly unconscious and uncaring that the hoofs of the vilest of his species trampled on those silken locks which a widowed mother was fondly expecting, ere the lapse of another fortnight, to press between her gentle fingers. Yet there he lay, the sole representative of her family, the possessor of large wealth, and, to all appearance, the destined enjoyer of unclouded happiness, a senseless corse! Herbert, also, from the same discharge, received a severe flesh-wound on the left shoulder, while the brigadier, overjoyed at having, as he called it, floored Boston Bill, had sprung undauntedly down into the very midst of his foes, and grasping the still tottering body of the ringleader round the waist, essayed to drag him to the broken gangway, and cast him into the sea.

Than this abandonment of his previously great advantage nothing could have been more imprudent; but that very impetuosity that gives to valour so many adjuncts bears with it the very drawback that often renders all its triumphs unavailing. Rage and revenge seemed to restore to Boston Bill that sense and consciousness of which Symonds's apparent coolness had before deprived him. In person, it is true, the brigadier, compared with ordinary men, was of tall and powerful stature, but in the hands of Boston Bill, he looked like a mere lath. The mutineer saw his advantage in a moment, and seized it. While Symonds vainly pulled at the huge waist of Boston, he planted his Herculean legs apart, and, remaining immovable as a rock, flung his iron arms around the shoulders of Symonds, and thus pinioning the latter most completely, so that he could in nowise move, the ringleader turned round to his followers, and, with his frightful countenance flaming with exulting rage, and his lips dropping blood at every word, hoarsely bellowed forth, "The knife, the knife, my boys! give him the knife! I'll hold him fast till you cut out his infernal heart!—quick!" At the word every other object seemed forgotten amongst the plunderers, but the congenial one of executing the brutal revenge of their leader. Every man seemed to possess a bowie-knife, and every one, bared at the summons, was raised in an instant to let out the life of the daring but unfortunate brigadier. Even at this dreadful moment, the courage of the soldier beamed brightly forth as ever.

"That's right, you cowards, strike home! never fear me, my hands are fast;" and strike home they certainly would, but at this instant, the towering form of neighbour Broadbrim dashed down the quarter-deck ladder, at a pace most unusual for his portly gravity; high above his head he swung, as though it had been a child's rocking-chair, the huge oak bench that he had torn up, as we have before seen, and crying, in a voice of thunder, "Friends! friends! thee must observe fair play," swept down with irresistible force the cumbrous but potent mass he wielded. Upon no less

than four unhappy skulls fell the terrific violence of his blow. Away flew their glittering and assassin-like daggers in every direction. Once more poured in a volley from the quarter-deck: backward fell the discomfited and senseless rebels among their own party. The steamer gave a heavy pitch at the same moment, and nearly all the combatants but Symonds, Broadbrim, and the bleeding Bill of Boston, lay scrambling on the deck.

"Charge, friend Herbert, charge!" cried Broadbrim.

At length, in the excitement of personal conflict, the quaker lost, in the general character of man, nearly all the peculiarities of his sect, and once more swinging round his bench, he discharged it full upon the already thrice-battered head of the ringleader.

With all the savage nature of the latter was mingled, as there often is, an infinite deal of cunning. For that hour, at least, he now perceived that the chances of victory had again deserted him; to strive against this he knew to be not only foolish but futile—a course of proceeding very likely to cost him his life, but which could not possibly regain the day—the only way to repair which was to reserve himself for the chances of some future occasion. Ducking his head on one side, so as to receive on his shoulder the weaver's beam of neighbour Broadbrim, he bore its tremendous battery comparatively unhurt; and while the peaceful friend was endeavouring to renew the titillation, he suddenly removed his clasp from behind the back to the two elbows of Symonds; and while he pinioned these to his waist, jerked, like a feather, the gallant brigadier back against his Philadelphian ally, and shouting to his subordinates, "Fall back, boys, fall back!" set them a most consistent example by quickly turning round himself, and darting out at the gangway, he ran up the rude steps, or cleets nailed over the paddle-boxes, in full retreat, towards the fore cabin.

"Friend, friend, we cannot spare thy company; thee must not leave us quite so soon!" roared Broadbrim, hurling, with great effect, as a parting blessing, his oaken bench upon the disordered heads of the panic-stricken mutineers, and then, with infinite more nimbleness than sagacity, darting after the retreating footsteps of Boston Bill.

CHAPTER LIV.

"I'll fared it then with Roderick Dhu,
That on the ground his targe he threw."

SCOTT.

THAT Broadbrim should be most unwilling, after all that had occurred, to see the ringleader of the mutiny escape comparatively unharmed was most natural. But it was exceedingly unlike his general conduct to venture so completely out of his element as to mount the paddle-box, a most dangerous and unprotected position, and there, on the seaman's own vantage ground, seek to give battle to his gigantic foe.

Had he contented himself with pursuing the enemy, the end he sought, namely, the destruction of Boston Bill, would have been perfectly secured.

Mr. St. John, equally with himself, had seen the necessity, and indeed justice, of securing this point, and, from the first practicable moment, namely, when Symonds made a rush at him, had covered the big pirate with his rifle, and only waited an opportunity to bring him down; in the motions of the fight, however, the danger of hitting a friend was too great to admit of his accomplishing his aim.

With that immovable deliberation evident in everything he did, he marked the flight of his prey, and following "Bill's" course with the muzzle of his rifle, was on the very point of firing, when up started the pursuing noddle of good Broadbrim, and thus sheltered the very person for whose capture or destruction he was so anxious.

Still Mr. St. John did not relinquish his intent, but, from the post he had taken on the quarter-deck, now continued to keep at his shoulder, coolly and very carefully ready, his rifle, for the very first opportunity he might have of bringing down his man.

When the mutineer heard the taunting cry of the quaker still as he ran, he turned his head half round to see if he were pursued, and, catching sight of his burly and formidable antagonist striding after him up the paddle-box, instantly resolved on the course he would adopt.

Revenge is sweet to most men, and to all violent spirits in particular; but to one in the position of the mutineer, its charms may readily be imagined. He speedily perceived how great

was the advantage he should have over a landsman on such a place of conflict, and had no sooner gained the summit of the paddles, than he fronted suddenly full round, and uttering a cry of fierce exultation, seized Broadbrim before he could attain the same point, and made a desperate effort to cast him overboard.

For this, however, the wide-awake quaker, who had seen him look over his shoulder, was fully prepared, and, striking the other a severe blow in the face with his naked hand, and dodging slightly inboard, he returned his cry of triumph with full interest, and a fair struggle began between the two parties.

The conspicuous station in which the combatants stood, and the clamour with which they had commenced their onslaught, attracted universal attention. Loud cries arose from both sides, and, as if by mutual consent, all lesser combats appeared to be suspended during this kind of duel between the principal leader on one side, and one who was certainly no undistinguished chief on the other.

Through every rapid turn and dodge of the two struggling bodies, St. John kept his rifle immovably fixed upon the form of Boston Bill, varying it for several moments, in the hope of putting an end to the conflict by one of those exquisitely-fine shots to which his practised hand and eye had been so long equal; and if any human being could have managed this, he was the man.

Again and again he was on the point of drawing his trigger, but, constantly as he did so, the intervening bulk of Broadbrim checked him in the very act, till, at length, he was fain to be content with waiting until he should see which proved the victor, and then, if the contest went against his side, he had little doubt of being able to bring down the ruffian before he could escape.

On the other side, the same style of reasoning prevailed, with this marked exception, that instead of one rifle pointed ready for the life of Broadbrim, should he succeed, there were ready the whole of the ambushed three; and though, perhaps, held in less skilful hands, we have already seen that these concealed marksmen were possessed of an aim by no means to be despised. Thus, then, the struggle proceeded.

"Now's your time, Bill! Throw him down—throw the rascal overboard!" shouted the mutineers, as they watched their precious favourite using every endeavour to follow their advice.

"Steady—steady, Broadbrim! Nothing can be better," returned the brigadier, resolved that the clamour of the others should not daunt one whose bravery had so entirely won his heart.

"Trip him up, Bill; give him the Boston kick, that will be a floorer. Now—now—as the steamer rolls."

While these were the various shouts on both sides, the battle steadily proceeded, and for some time with very equal chances, the intense rage and evident exhaustion of the mutineer being compensated by the much better footing his sea habits had taught him.

Now the struggling parties, locked in that deadly embrace, seemed reeling together into the sea; then, with a strong effort, they recovered themselves, twining their brawny arms around each other, and bending and twisting into every shape, form, and attitude, now both of them nearly bowed down to the planks on which they stood, and then presently regaining their upright position, and fixing on each other looks but too indicative of the deadly purpose their hearts bore one towards the other.

Both knew full well that this was no ordinary encounter in which the one might be thrown down and wounded, and then rescued by his friends. No! one of them, it was quite clear, must plunge into the boiling sea beneath, that every moment parted at their feet, sinking down into a dreadful abyss, or rushed seething upwards from below, in a state of foam and fury, as if it must inevitably swallow them both up, striking the paddle-boxes each time with a violence that excited the hearers' surprise how they could stand such rough usage without splintering into a thousand fragments, and often sending up high jets of spray that wet both the strugglers to the skin, and for a few seconds nearly obscured them from the view of either party, while perpetually beneath their footsteps was heard the incessant and continual roar of the engine, or, rather, the paddle-wheels, as they tore through the heavy seas, making the solid wood that encased them quiver like an aspen; withal seeming to render no additional fight or evil passion necessary, in order to put into the utmost jeopardy the lives of all that could venture on them.

With these fearful and marked concomitants, then, the extraordinary struggle proceeded; and, though taking as it does some time to recount on paper, yet so intense was the interest felt in it by the numerous beings around, whose upturned and eager countenances were lighted by the sun just rising, little more than two minutes had elapsed since the fatal fray commenced.

More than once or twice the unsteady footing of Broadbrim had nearly proved fatal to him as the steamer made some sudden lurch or roll; and though on each of these occasions, Boston Bill had pressed his hardest, still the quaker's coolness had enabled him not only to recover himself, but to benefit by the experience, and he now seemed to stand unshaken while the steamer descended the trough of one wave or mounted furiously the crest of another.

The hæmorrhage that still proceeded from the Bostonian's jaw was evidently and rapidly rendering him too weak to continue the contest much longer. Broadbrim slowly but surely might now be seen pressing his huge adversary inch by inch gradually over the paddle-box. As soon as this became clearly perceptible, loud shouts of congratulation arose from the saloon party.

"Bravo, brave Broadbrim!—now you have him—press him hard, and he must go!—Over with him!—Bravo, for ever, bravo, Broadbrim!"

Nor were the set on the other side less alive to the tendency of the conflict.

"Never mind, Bill, my boy, hold up, hold up your pecker. Kick him, kick him, for ever! kick him, and he must let go. Why the devil don't you kick him!"

But whether Boston Bill thought fighting to be one thing, and directing a fight to be another, we know not; perhaps he was fearful that, however sound the advice might be as to the kicking style of action, it was not at all impossible that, in having recourse to such a measure, he might suddenly lose his balance, and thus for ever destroy the little chance that remained for him. But though, however, he certainly did not kick, he had recourse to a trick that was quite as effectual; while the parties were still balanced on the very edge almost, and when every person on the quarter-deck, and on the fore-castle too, expected every moment to see Boston Bill topple down into the abyss below—while the passengers, in the midst of their exultation, were only fearful lest the desperate seaman, in falling, should persist in dragging his opponent to similar destruction—Boston Bill, in truth, however, entertained no such intention; but suddenly falling down upon both his knees, and diving his head between the legs of his antagonist, with a vast effort he endeavoured to tilt him fairly up into the air. In the weak state of the mutineer, this, with so heavy a frame as that of the quaker, was impossible; but, unfortunately, Broadbrim, mistaking that which was a mere *ruse* for the real giving way of the seaman, instinctively let go his hold to save himself, and, impelled by his own impetus, before he could take any step to avert it, fell at full length over the body of Boston Bill, his own head and arms inclining down the fore part of the paddle-box, and his right shoulder actually impending over the flood below.

"Bravo, bravo, Boston Bill—you've done the old quaker after all!" shouted the mutineers.

But the deed was yet not quite finished. Boston Bill had still to extricate himself from beneath the quaker's clutches. His first effort having proved ineffectual, the sailor, who seemed much invigorated by the cheers of his companions, made a second and most desperate effort before our friend could sufficiently recover his position to attempt anything like a counter movement; and the Bostonian, succeeding in getting his hand beneath the moveable flap that opened to repair the paddles, gave his body a violent toss, and the same motion that rolled the quaker towards the sea, helped to carry his wily antagonist safely down the fore part of the box, towards his friends on the fore-castle.

On the instant it could be detected that the two combatants had parted company, St. John renewed his aim at the mutineer. Scarcely did he, however, possess a moment's time for the execution of his project. As the seaman rolled rapidly down out

of sight, one ankle just popped up to the old man's view—no more.

Small as this object was, it proved, however, more than sufficient for our friend's unerring aim. The flash that momentarily gleamed upon the quarter-deck, was followed by the flying away of a few particles of clothing from the extremity of the wounded man. In the next instant he had disappeared from sight, and no one was left upon the paddle-box but the unfortunate quaker.

Seeing his perilous situation, one of the younger passengers sprang to his assistance; but the instant discharge of all the three rifles on the forecastle fatally wounded the generous volunteer, and he fell dead into the sea. A heavy roll of the steamer followed—the stout-hearted friend evidently felt himself going. With undiminished energy he grasped again and again at the too smoothly-finished boards, to see if some rude cranny might not give him an opportunity of recovering his lost position. But, alas, it was in vain!

One after another, all his attempted efforts to catch hold proved futile—for a brief space he seemed to remain, to the surprise of all, poised upon the edge of the steamer—and then, as she suddenly topped one sea more potent than the rest, her bow heavily pitched down to descend into the dark void beneath.

The sudden jerk gave the last fatal impetus that was necessary, and slowly, but inevitably, the athletic form of the gallant quaker, to the grief of all his friends who saw him, rolled over and over, still vainly clutching at all that came near it, until it fell with a heavy plunge into the dark and pitiless sea below.

The loud shouts of triumph that now rose from the rebels were, however, soon changed to other notes, and drowned in the rapid report of the rifles which avenged his fall; and in particular, the brigadier, who felt that he owed a life and much kindness to the friend who had just gone, cheered on all around him to the attack, and drove the enemy, as he thought, securely before him to their last retreat; having done which, he cheered forward his party to the destruction of those ambushed sharpshooters, whose fire had throughout proved so signally gallant.

Having run through two of these with his sword, one after the other, he rashly ventured to look into the bow of the steamer, to make sure that none were spared; and here, unexpectedly coming upon his old friend, Boston Bill, the latter contrived to surprise his cutlass, and throwing him down with one hand, assisted by another seaman, they quickly gagged the brigadier's mouth, and made him a prisoner, despite all his efforts to the contrary, which our readers may suppose were neither few nor slight.

In the meanwhile, the brigadier's friends, from whom he had thus rashly separated himself, having, as they thought, fully discharged their duty, and not, unfortunately, having noticed what

had become of their commander, they naturally enough retired to the quarter-deck, where matters equally exciting continued to engage the attention of all hands, until Symonds had been securely smuggled below into the fore cabin, beyond all hope or chance of rescue.

CHAPTER LV.

“He was a fisherman, but fished for men.”

BYRON.

DURING the personal contest in which Broadbrim had been engaged, though there were many noisier spectators and encouragers of the fight, there were none who took a deeper interest in its issue, or would have risked more to determine it in his favour, than friend Herbert, between whom and the Herculean man of peace as warm a friendship had arisen as the brief date of their acquaintance rendered possible.

Our hero, from the first, perceived that Broadbrim had committed a great mistake in attempting to engage his opponent at such a frightful disadvantage as he had done; and though it did not occur to him, as it did to Mr. St. John, to be ready to punish the victor, if it should prove their common enemy, yet a thought, equally in Herbert's line, did present itself, namely, the desirability of taking some step to save the vanquished in the struggle, if that should prove to be their friend.

Hastily procuring a grating, and attaching to this three or four ropes' ends, with the utmost rapidity with which he could cut and hitch them on, and finally securing to the grating itself the long and stout peak halyards, he rapidly got his apparatus together, cut adrift the halyards in question, made them fast to one of the mizen-shrouds, hoisted over the grating into the mizen-chains, jumped over after it himself, and coiling the rope in his hand, clear from all impediments, as soon as everything was ready for the catastrophe, turned his glance coolly ahead to see who should be the loser in the battle, and to act accordingly.

At last, to his great grief, the star of that thrice-dyed rascal, Boston Bill, once more prevailed, and neighbour Broadbrim, as we have seen, fell headlong into the frightful void beneath him.

Great as his fears were that no possible assistance could now save the struggler, he determined that no effort should be lost, and at one moment almost resolved to descend himself into the boiling surf, in order to catch the other as he rose, his great fear being that Broadbrim might never see the effort made to save him, or might possibly be unable to swim, or that, lastly, he might rise too far astern for the grating to reach him.

The last alarm was occasioned by the fact of the steamer being, at the time of Broadbrim's fall, so high upon the crest of the waves, in the act of launching down, that a fall of many feet, more than the whole depth of the hull, took place before the body reached the water, and then, after the first plunge, the swift rapidity with which the steamer buried herself in the deep blue valley beneath rendered it highly probable that, when the diver rose to the surface, the ship, in her rapid motion, might have sprang over his head, and left him far astern.

Excited by these various feelings, Herbert, with a convulsive shudder, watched the quaker's body as it fell head over heels, till meeting with the clear but purple surface of the sea, a momentary burst of foam appeared around him, and down—down he went, almost, as Herbert thought, upon the very spot which the wheels would strike when next they hit the water.

But no—that dreadful fate, at least, the quaker was spared. The spot of foam his fall had made remained visible on the dark surge for many minutes, and near this Herbert well knew his friend must rise, if at all.

With a degree of anxiety that may easily be conceived, he marked the round circle of white as it drew near him. The paddle-wheel hit just within it; still the circlet remained unbroken; it rapidly passed the centre of the ship—still no rising body could be seen; it drew opposite the gangway—still the ocean gave no sign of rendering up its prey; it drew abreast of the main-chains—still no reappearance of his friend. On—on—on flew the spot of unsullied spray on its ground of translucent indigo, appearing in its smiling freshness to mock the aching heart that asked it to give back the missing comrade—the valuable ally.

Now it was opposite the mizen-chains, and now, alas! it was actually past him.

"All is over," muttered Herbert; "perhaps, poor fellow, he was wounded; or perhaps, which I never thought of before, he might not be able to swim. That's the heaviest loss we shall have this day, I hope," he added, still mournfully watching the departure of the foam as it floated astern, careless or notecless who mourned or rejoiced on its coming or going.

The lieutenant was in the very act of returning to get inboard to see what farther demanded his attention, when, in turning to do so, some object caught his attention, almost at his feet, but a little nearer to the bow—some black spot, realizing almost the

words of the poet, as if there were in the dark abyss a darker still. It was now opposite to him, and clearly was growing larger; it was something beneath the waters; and though it might be fancy, Herbert observed what he thought looked like an arm.

"Yes," he exclaimed, "and surely there goes a leg. At any rate, there can be no harm in making a chance effort. I see the exact place where it must come up, if at all, and I'll cast the grating just astern of it."

Suiting the action to the word, our hero rapidly, as he proposed, threw down the grating into the sea, a little nearer to the stern than the point where he observed the rapidly increasing object.

Anxiously he watched them both floating past him, until, in another second, doubt grew into certainty. And, first, his eye could distinctly trace the figure of a man, then the portly outline of the quaker; and, at last, the deep blue surface of the ocean was ruffled into foam, as the countenance of the worthy friend appeared, somewhat more moved, it must be confessed, than usual, but still wonderfully possessed, and fighting hard for life as ever.

So far from not being able to swim, it was now evident that the quaker was a great proficient in that useful art. With one hand he cleared the salt water from his eyes, and with the other, battling the waves most stoutly, struck ahead meanwhile the same way as the steamer, and not only looked up to her decks as if he quite expected assistance in the natural course of things, but evidently recognised friend Herbert, and made some attempt to address him.

The distance, however, between them was still so great, the wind was still so high, and the noise of the paddles dashing in the water so loud, that all conversation was useless. Herbert understood this in a moment, and, mutely pointing with one finger to the grating, which was a little astern of the quaker, with one hand, and holding out with the other the halyards which were secured to it, Broadbrim, like a sensible body as he was, lost no further time in attempting to parley, but looked round in the direction pointed out, saw the grating, immediately seized hold of it, and, before the strain of the ship came to drag them both through the water, lashed himself firmly to the wooden bars by the lanyards which Herbert had provided for that purpose. The question that now remained to puzzle them was how to get the worthy friend on board once more.

Ignorant of what had been going on ahead, Herbert naturally concluded that any attempt to hoist him in in the proper way, namely, by getting a whip on one of the yards, would be instantly frustrated by the rifles of the enemy in the bow; and so, in all probability, that would have been the result.

Knowing himself to be pretty strong, he then tried to hoist in neighbour Broadbrim by his own exertions. To gather in the

slack of the rope was easy enough ; but when it came to hoisting up the hugh person of the friend, he found all his efforts to start him unavailing, further than to drag the sufferer through the water, a process not necessary to enable Broadbrim to benefit by copious draughts of the briny element.

Under these circumstances, he was obliged to take a turn with the tow-line ; and, jumping in on the quarter-deck, communicated the joyful intelligence that neighbour Broadbrim was not yet become food for fishes.

Having looked round in vain for the brigadier, Herbert naturally concluded that some good reason existed for his absence, namely, that he was busy attending to some duty for the good of the common weal, little imagining the extremes of wrath and indignity he was at that moment undergoing from the mutineers forward.

Our hero having picked out three or four of the stoutest among the passengers, they all jumped over into the mizen-chains, and after some slight difficulty, succeeded in hoisting Broadbrim once more on board. For some moments, the worthy man stood, faint and exhausted, leaning against the mizen rigging, puffing, and panting, and throwing from his mouth a vast quantity of salt water he had been compelled to swallow, very much against the grain. At last, as soon as he could speak, he exclaimed—

“This is both over early and over long to take a bath ; and, on my conscience, I am in no hurry to repeat the dip. As for thee, friend Herbert, I owe thee a large debt for my rescue, and hope we may both live to see it paid yet for all that’s come and gone, though that is much. And now let us finish driving the hornets to their hole ; though, peradventure, I am late in the day to propose that which thou hast already accomplished.”

“Don’t distress yourself about them, Broadbrim,” said Herbert, “but come down to the saloon as soon as possible, and I will mix you a good stiff glass of grog while you change your clothes.”

“Why, truly,” responded the other, laying his broad but now blue hand on a certain tender portion of the person, which in him was very largely developed, “after all the exertions of the morning, I confess the creature-comforts are not to be despised : and, truly, my morning dip has given me an appetite. But, first of all, let me inquire, how is friend Symonds ? He is a rash young man ; but, I confess, to save his life, I would willingly take dip the second. Where is he ? ”

“I haven’t seen him lately,” replied Herbert ; “but, never fear he is too wide awake a person not to be all right, wherever he is. I suppose he is gone down into the saloon for something or other ; so come along and join him.”

“Lead on, friend, and I will,” answered the quaker, motioning to Herbert, who at once did as he was desired.

CHAPTER LVI.

"Forth with my coffers, all my gold is free,
Ere harm shall hap to aught of thine or thee."

No sooner did Broadbrim appear on deck, than congratulations were showered down from every side, both on him and his deliverer, who certainly deserved the greatest credit for the deliberate manner in which he had set to work, and saved the quaker.

Before going below, Herbert now carried into effect the project which had been before prevented; and, taking advantage of the severe blow which had recently been struck against the mutineers, by which their riflers had been carried off, and such losses inflicted on their numbers, they rapidly shued round the cutter into the original position for which she was intended, and, bundling all the mattresses into the body of the boat, left her as a complete blockade against the often-contested gangway, and appointed three of the passengers, as before, to keep up a recognizance on the movements of the mutineers, and to fire unhesitatingly on all who should dare to expose themselves to observation.

These precautionary measures taken, the rest of our friends repaired to the cabin below. Here, in some employment or other, Herbert naturally expected to find the brigadier. Not, however, seeing him, he thought he might have retired to the private cabin to change his dress; accordingly, he prepared to seek him there, but as he was still not to be found, he then commenced the inquiry on all hands.

"Where is the brigadier?"

No brigadier was, however, forthcoming. Had any one seen him? No; no one had even seen him, that is, at least, in the cabin; and after various inquiries as to where he had last appeared, it was finally discovered that he was last seen, like a good and valiant knight, cutting down the enemy, in the persons of the ambushed riflemen, whose severe annoyance he had often himself felt so keenly and so loudly deplored. Still, if no ill had befallen him, why was he not forthcoming with the rest? What could have kept him behind his party?

Every one foreboded evil, but none liked to acknowledge its probability. Again a search was made, and again it proved ineffectual; and while this continued to throw a great damp on the general joy at Broadbrim's recovery, the public hopes and

fears were suddenly and sadly set at rest by the arrival of one of the watch, who ran down, pale and breathless, exclaiming,—

“The brigadier’s taken prisoner; and they are going to hang him!”

At this disastrous intelligence one universal shriek arose from the ladies in general; and, in particular, the candlestick-maker’s only heiress swooned away. With all the fair, the gallant soldier’s intrepid bravery above deck, and winning attentions below, had rendered him a great favourite; while, on the susceptible heart of the tender young candlestick-maker, divers soft speeches, winning smiles, and tender pressures of the hand, had assisted in carrying on a flirtation, and making an impression that would never have been recked of, had not this premature and inconsiderate disclosure been made of the brave brigadier’s captivity, and threatened execution.

“What!” exclaimed all the gentlemen, on hearing the intelligence; “you must be under some mistake, boy!”

“Oh, no; there can be no mistake in the matter,” said the messenger, in an under voice, as the ladies all rallied round the fainting girl; “for they have brought him out upon the fore-castle, with a halter round his neck, and his arms pinioned behind him.”

This startling information, combined with the loud shouting that was now heard on the quarter-deck, caused a general rush of the gentlemen from the saloon; and when they arrived in sight of the fore-castle, there, truly enough, as their informant had told them, the gallant brigadier stood pinioned with his arms behind him, while round his neck was fastened a halter, or yard-rope, that was evidently reeved through some block aloft before the foremast, which had thus shielded from the watch on deck the person of the sailor who must have gone aloft to fix it, and who, having done so, appeared to have returned in safety to the fore cabin below with the other end of the rope in question, which had doubtless been there fitted on to the neck of the victim, and the latter made to ascend and exhibit himself to his friends on the quarter-deck, in the interesting costume he now offered to their eyes.

“Halloa, brigadier, what is the matter?” shouted Herbert, the moment he came up and saw this spectacle which, but for the fatal termination to which it pointed, certainly wore an appearance that looked droll to a degree.

It is quite clear the brigadier heard the question, but in answer to it only shook his head in a very mournful manner. Herbert then repeated his query, and still getting no reply, was about to take up a telescope to examine the cause of this unwonted silence, but Broadbrim interposed, saying,—

“Friend Herbert, thee mayest well wonder to hear friend Symonds silent: but I can save thee all the trouble of looking

for I perceive the men of Gath have saved him every fatigue of talking by treating him like a common scold; that is, friend Herbert, they have gagged him."

"Hark, sir!" interrupted Mr. St. John; "I hear somebody hailing."

And this, indeed, was true; for silence having been obtained, they could all distinguish these words shouted in the fore-castle, and which, to use a term once much in vogue, appeared to come from the depths of the pitcher-country; or, in plain English, the speaker, unwilling to hazard his doubtless valuable person, continued concealed below in the fore cabin, while he directed his voice to those who remained aft,—

"Quarter-deck, ahoy, there!"

"Halloa!" answered Herbert for the rest.

"We want to know," resumed the first speaker, "whether you consider this prisoner worth a ransom, or whether you wish us to proceed in hanging him?"

"Why, undoubtedly, we wish to ransom him, if you will give us a chance," returned Herbert; "what is it you want for his ransom?"

"If we send a party aft to you to discuss the matter, will you promise, on the honour of gentlemen, to observe a strict truce; and if we don't agree to the terms of the ransom, to let our party come back safe and sound without injury!"

"What say you, gentlemen?" demanded Herbert, turning round to the other passengers; "you hear the demand this fellow makes: would it be safe to grant it?"

"Stay, sir, stay," said one of the volunteers. "See how the brigadier is shaking his head! Does he mean, do you think, that there is some treachery?"

"I don't know," said Herbert; "but, as to that, we can demand, before going any farther, that Symonds shall be unbound, to say what he thinks proper to us on the propriety of this course."

To this all parties seemed agreed; and accordingly, Herbert hailed back to the fore-castle, saying,—

"Before we go any further into a discussion of this matter of ransoming the prisoner, we wish you to ungag him, in order that we may hear what he has to say to it himself."

"Wait a moment, then," answered back the voice; and a delay for some time took place, which was occupied by the holders of the quarter-deck, in discussing the possible danger that might accrue to their party from any treachery on the side of the mutineers, and finally it was agreed *nem. con.* that, if only three of the latter were allowed to be present at the conference, as to the ransom, it was utterly impossible that any danger could arise, as these would be easily overpowered, and would form a sufficient pledge for the good conduct of the rest.

They then debated whether they should receive them in the saloon or on deck ; and it was decided that the latter should be the place of rendezvous, the reason being a very sufficient one, given, therefore, by Broadbrim.

"Thou seest, friend," said the quaker, "that should these knaves in buckram prove treacherous, which is, after all, but a part of their nature, and thou hast by force to fall back upon the carnal weapon, much damage might arise to the ladies below, not only in point of mental suffering, but actually in point of bodily injuries, were it necessary with a strong arm to preserve the peace."

In this sentiment all having joined, notice was sent below to all the gentlemen to attend the anticipated conference with every possible description of arms, in order to form as imposing a front as possible.

CHAPTER LVII.

"The heralds now conduct them to the fleet,
Where wise Ulysses, with full powers to treat
For the rich ransom of their captive, sate,
With sterner Diomed, in deep debate."

Iliad.

"QUARTER-DECK, ahoy!" was now heard in the voice that had first hailed them; "we have thought over your request to ungag this red herring in a blue coat, and we can't grant it; therefore, if you can't ransom him without hearing him preach, why we'll take the trouble off your hands, by hanging him at once."

Here a very significant twitch was given to the rope, which rather swayed the brigadier from his perpendicular; and, as the end was fastened round his neck, in perfect halter-fashion, it must have given him great pain. Herbert, who saw this wanton exercise of power, and beheld it with the greatest indignation, immediately cried out,—

"Hold! you infernal scoundrels! Robbers and cut-throats as you are, you might at least respect the misfortunes of a brave man, even though you do happen to have him in your power."

"You be smothered!" was replied. "You be cutting it tarnation superfine grand, ain't you? that's a fact. You may think yourself well off we haven't got your neck in the halter, or else, I'm by no means clear, ransom or no ransom, that you would ever get back to your friends again: so don't you talk, but just give us an answer to our summons, for we shan't keep this fellow waiting here long. I dare say you think you be doing it all very fine, but we know more what passes in that saloon aft, than you guess for. What right have you to keep back the gentleman's money, when he's all ready, else, to act like a sensible man, and pay it over to us, to save all farther dispute, you pia-waw-waw?"

Herbert could not help smiling at the word dispute being applied to a case like the present, where one party was actuated by the grossest feelings of plunder and slaughter, and the other was fighting for their lives and the public property, for such, in a manner, the freight of the ship might be termed.

Desiring the mutineers to give them ten minutes for considera-

tion, Herbert returned to the group who were standing near the skylight, Mr. St. John among the rest, and, addressing him in particular, said,—

“Before we proceed any farther in the question of the proposed ransom, it occurs to me to be a very unnecessary step, merely because the brigadier is in a little more peril than has surrounded us all for the last twenty-four hours, that we should now, without another question or struggle, abandon the property for which we have made so stout a fight. I am of opinion, before we do anything of the sort, it would be much wiser to make a bold sally and cut the brigadier’s halter. Being, nearly all of us, all armed, it would be easily managed; and, depend upon it, some fear of this sort is their only reason for not allowing their prisoner, the brigadier, to be ungagged; perhaps he would have told us that the mutineers are so weakened in their losses, and so divided in their counsel, that one more vigorous attack would bring us an unqualified victory.”

“I, for one, meet this proposition with the most stout resistance,” said Mr. St. John; “it appears to me erroneous altogether; wrong in principle, feeble in policy.”

“Well, friend, to me it appears altogether as correct in each,” said Broadbrim, apparently determined to support Herbert to the uttermost.

“How you can reconcile that view with your persuasion of universal peace and charity, sir, I leave you to decide,” drily rejoined St. John. “Still, for all that, I must take leave to express my own opinions as to the subject, which is, unfortunately, so much connected with myself, as this ill-omened money; and once for all, I must remark that a great deal too much contention has already been allowed to take place respecting it. On the head of you, sir, man of peace though you call yourself, will rest the blood of those unhappy men who have fallen since our council of war last night; and now, instead of counselling further bloodshed, do you not think it would be more becoming in you to gaze on the ill-fated remains of that poor young man whom your example has led to rush upon an untimely fate; but I will take care that no more victims are offered up upon the shrine of Mammon, as far as my property is concerned.”

“As thou pleasest, friend; as thou pleasest,” calmly rejoined the quaker; “thou seemest as strongly moved as if we were battling to despoil thee of thy worldly goods, instead of to protect them in thy possession; but whatever we may think of thy generosity to thine enemies, I, for one, can never forget the amount of thy gratitude to thy friends.”

“Friendship!” said St. John, almost fiercely, as he heard this word, “do you think me such a fool as to indulge in any dream of the sort? Friendship! and among mankind, too, as if the thing were possible. No doubt your services are great, sir,” with a

profound bow, "but I think they would have been greater had you simply waited until they were demanded."

Without uttering another word, Mr. St. John advanced to the break of the quarter-deck, and, hailing the mutineers, exclaimed:—

"Seamen, the great bulk of the property which you desire to gain is mine. I have no objection to give up every farthing that I possess to ransom the life of your prisoner; therefore, at once cast him loose from the degrading position in which you have placed him. In a few minutes I will tell you whether the majority of the gentlemen who are passengers on board will permit some of your party to come aft, and fix the conditions on which we give you up the gold, with a promise of security from all molestation. If they will allow me to pass my word to you to that effect, I will; if not, still you will believe me the gold is yours, on condition that you give up all further firing, and respect the comfort and life of your prisoner."

"Avast heaving, old fellow! not so fast! your memory seems wonderful short on one point. If you give up the gold, remember we shall ship it in one of the boats, and be off with it at once. You don't expect, I hope, that we are so precious green as to go back with you to England, and get our necks stretched there by the laws for piracy? You don't expect that, I hope, do you? because if you do you are mistaken! so make your minds up to that when you consult. We'll give you back our prisoner safe and sound, and we'll cut our stick at once with your money-chests. No mistake about the matter either way, you know."

"When I make a gift, it is a gift in every sense. Man, restore your prisoner to me unhurt, and you may take my gold if you please with you the next moment! the further and the quicker you wander with it, the better I shall be pleased; you may take it to the depths of the sea, if you will."

"Bravo, old-stick-in-the-mud! We don't want to go quite so far as that, thank ye all the same to you," returned the sailor, while a loud cheer burst from his companions concealed below the hatchway. St. John having now put a definite bar to any further defence of the freight, returned to the circle of passengers whom he had left on the after-part of the quarter-deck. Here he found Ebenezer Wire holding forth in a perfect state of frenzy.

"I tell you I never will consent to it; I tell you I'd rather they should tear my claws off, that's a fact. What! give up my own gold! No; they shall take my heart out of me first, and fry it before my face. Ha, here he comes," turning round, as St. John appeared. "And a pretty mess you've made of it, you have! Why, you fool, you're as mad as an adder! that's a fact. I always heard you English were a snivelling, drivelling, snail-pace, tarnation superfine set of fools, but I never saw such a proof of it as I have this blessed morning of my life! This blessed morning I

never shall forget, I tell you. What! seventy-five thousand pounds worth of gold, and give it up without striking a blow! Why you must have stole it, that's what you must, and I don't scruple to tell you so, that's a fact. You, you," continued the Yankee, at last getting into such a rage, and vociferating his words out with such rapidity, and so strong a nasal twang, that it was difficult to follow them. "You give up seventy-five thousand pounds of honest money!" as he saw Mr. St. John silently looking at him, with a smile of supreme contempt. "No, no, neither you nor any other man that ever was born could do it, so I tell you; but there—there, it's no use talking to you! it's quite clear to my mind that for you to talk of giving up this here sum without a single blow, you must be the most complete, tarnation, superfine coward, in all the creation."

Up to this moment we have said that Mr. St. John had borne unmoved the torrent of Ebenezer Wire's vituperation; wearing all the while that look of mingled pity and contempt, half generous, half derisive, as much as to say this poor wretch is only speaking from the feelings of his grovelling nature, he is unendowed with the same faculties to support his misfortunes that I am blest withal, and therefore I forgive him this exhibition of impotent rage.

When, however, the word "coward" fell from the Yankee's lips, a total change seemed to pass over the old man's face. In an instant a haughty and terrible sternness reigned predominant. The eye flashed fire for a few moments, as if partly taken by surprise that any one should dare to use such language, and as if partly debating how it should be met.

The hesitation was not long; and, Ebenezer, like most intemperate men, seemed too much engrossed by his own folly to notice the approach of the storm he had himself raised, else there is little doubt that he would have used his time better by getting out of the way; for, quickly darting his hands on the muzzle of Herbert's rifle, the insulted gentleman, who found it yield instantly to his grasp, swung the stock for two seconds in the air, and then, with all possible force, dashed it full in the face of Ebenezer.

"Take that, sir," said Mr. St. John, at the same moment; "that is the only answer that I condescend to such a lie."

The dose just administered was so richly deserved, and answered so completely to the feelings of all around who had heard the provocation, that a sort of general buzz of approbation arose from the lips of every one but Ebenezer, who, however, received the salute given to him in a manner that did not excite much less surprise than he himself manifested on being so summarily brought to book.

"Hallo, Britisher!" exclaimed he, applying his hand to his face, which, as may easily be supposed, bled profusely from the heavy blow, "I didn't expect that o' you; if it was some of our folks, I

can tell you among us Yankees, they would say this was carrying the joke too far. Why didn't you say what was coming, or tell a fellow you didn't like jesting? How was I to know that you'd go to take offence at a little figure of speech?—there's no harm in what I say, nor any offence ever taken among folks where I come from right off south. One would think you came down east, that's where you come from, and you're a pretty inconsiderate, proud, haughty, passionate chap, that's what you are! But, if you come that dodge again, I shall be angry, I shall, and no mistake. But, now to business."

But what Mr. Ebenezer said, after the extraordinary opinion he seemed to entertain of what was a joke and what went beyond it, did not seem to gain much attention.

The passengers, seeing it was useless any longer to fight against Mr. St. John's resolute determination, not to permit his property to be made a cause of bloodshed, at once agreed to authorize his passing his word of honour to the mutineers, that any three of them, who might come aft to arrange a ransom, should enjoy all the protection of an armistice, being free to come, or go, or stay, during the next two hours, without let or hinderance.

The old gentleman at this expressed his thanks for their concession to his views, as well as his gratitude for the readiness they had displayed to protect his property, should he require it; and then, hailing the mutineers, told them, that they might send aft any of their numbers not exceeding three, towards whom he was authorized by his fellow-passengers to pass his honour, that every protection and immunity should be observed.

CHAPTER LVIII.

"Can such things be,
And overcome us like a summer cloud,
Without our special wonder?"

SHAKESPEARE.

WHEN the storm in its fury had swept off the officers of the ship, and several of its principal seamen, it deprived the passengers, as a matter of course, of all means of knowing what sailors were still left on board, and whether any of those so left had joined the mutinous party.

Up to the time when the helmsman was shot, none of the crew had appeared to be concerned in the proceedings, but, after his loss, all further clue to the identity of any of the perpetrators in the violence had passed beyond the reach of Herbert and his friends.

Whether, therefore, any of the seamen of the vessel were supporting the scheme of plunder—whether they had been made prisoners, and kept in forcible captivity—whether they had all been washed overboard—or, whether they were simply holding back, afraid to be seen participating in the guilty seizure of the ship, but yet not able, or not choosing to prevent it—were all matters of mere speculation. The same, also, with the stokers, whose duty it was to manage the engine; and, indeed, so long as this continued to be worked, it was a matter of indifference to those who had the command of the helm what might be the intentions of those who propelled the ship ahead, since this was quite clear she could only go in the direction chosen by those who had the guidance of the rudder.

For some time, Herbert had entertained strong suspicions that the compass by which they were steering, and which was a sort of toy compass belonging to a passenger, was a very weak and faulty one; still, as the weather remained so thick as totally to exclude all possibility of getting any observation of the heavenly bodies, right or wrong, they had no other remedy for it but to make the best dead-reckoning in their power, and to trust the rest to the chapter of accidents.

"Friend Herbert, dost thou not think the weather is grown exceeding cold?" demanded the quaker, flapping his body with his huge arms, as if to keep it warm.

"Yes," answered Herbert, "I have thought so several times during the last few hours, and through the whole of last night; a sensation which increases every hour; but troubles of any sort never come singly we know, and I presume this sharp weather comes to remind us of the fact, as Ebenezer Wire here would say."

"Look, friend, look," interrupted Broadbrim, directing Herbert's attention to the forecastle; "methinks here come the high contracting parties."

"Ay," quoth Ebenezer; "now we shall see a scene that has not often been witnessed upon the seas, I calculate; one giving up a fortune who might keep it, and the strong yielding to the weak. They come in state, too, mister. What! have we three niggers, or at least in sable?"

"No," said Herbert, looking in the quarter to which his attention had been directed. "The first is your friend, Boston Bill: only I see that he and his companions have all blacked their faces, as if they thought it not impossible that we might yet have to meet them for this business in a court of justice, and therefore they imagine we shall be more puzzled in recognising them."

"Truly prudential. Ah! now I see it is that limping varlet who assisted me to a cold bath of such extreme copiousness scarce an hour ago. It is a pity to see a man like that spinning himself a halter, with as much cleverness as would, if honestly exerted, conduct him to irreproachable wealth and honour: but here they are, and now let us hear what they have to say for themselves."

As Broadbrim ceased, three tall and powerful figures ascended the quarter-deck. They were most of them dressed in the wild peculiar style of men accustomed to pass their lives in the forest, with just such a dash here and there of something nautical as plainly proved their skins and other trappings to be a mere disguise.

Each man wore a belt stuck full of pistols, and ready, at the slightest motion of his hand, together with the instrument so deadly in close conflict which we have so often described, which many of the passengers now had an opportunity of inspecting, for the first time, and which, from its razor-like keenness and deadly polish, produced a most striking effect.

Most of the passengers seemed insensibly to give way to an involuntary sudder as they contemplated this disgrace to a free country, and dwelt for a moment in fancy on the unpleasant acquaintance which their throats had, in all probability, escaped making with it.

From the instruments of the negotiators the transition was natural to their persons; and if the decorations instilled you with dread, those who wore them were, in an eminent degree, calculated to fill you with still more horror and loathing: from no one of them yet seemed to be washed off the sanguinary traces of last

night's fray: but on their clothes, their hands, their faces, were left its dark and murder-telling stains.

None of them appeared to have shaved for the last week, and this carelessness did not tend to weaken the other effects to which we have alluded, while the eyes of all looked bloodshot with drink and watching. Expressions of the most hardened cruelty and villany were traceable on their countenances; and, as if they might have otherwise failed to produce sufficient disgust, the features of all were smeared over with a composition of oil and candle-black.

Two of the parties appeared to be wholly unknown to any of the spectators; but that Boston Bill should hope to escape recognition was an absurdity, when his left eye was still as distinctly recognisable, from the terrible blow inflicted on it by Herbert, and renewed by the gallant brigadier, and which now appeared to wear so threatening an aspect, that nothing, according to the account of the surgeon, whom the extraordinary scene had tempted to the quarter-deck—nothing but a miracle of nature's working could preserve the sight.

In addition to this, there was the flesh-wound of Symonds's rifle-shot, which had struck out several of the ruffian's teeth; and, in conclusion, by burying itself in the fleshy part of the jaw, raised a swelling, and produced an irritation, that, if unaided by surgical care, might in a few hours cost him his life.

As this creature stood upon the quarter-deck, spared, through all the dangers he had run, to demand that spoil for which he had risked and paid so much, Herbert could not help whispering to the quaker—

"How wonderful, indeed, are the ways of Providence! Look at that wretch, permitted to come through all these hairbreadth escapes, and yet live on unhurt, for purposes of plunder and violence, such as that for which he is now about to obtain his reward: almost cut and hacked to pieces as he is, and, as you see at this moment, scarcely able to stand for that last wound which St. John gave him in the ankle, just after you rolled overboard. And yet, only the other day, the papers recorded the death of a beloved and amiable nobleman, the head and delight of a family, the author of extensive charity, the ornament and delight of his circle; who, from triflingly wounding himself with an axe with which he was amusing himself in his own park, was suddenly snatched from everything dear by the stern hand of death! Truly, when one sees such a wretch as this live on, though so much more injured, one is almost inclined to murmur against the decree."

"Friend, friend, I marvel to hear thy good sense fall into such errors! To say nothing of sacred writers, what doth the profane Herodotus narrate as the memorable speech of the de-throned Croesus, heard first from a Grecian sage, and afterwards proved by his own misfortunes? 'No man can be pronounced

truly happy until after his death.' Heaven makes manifest its ways to man in many shapes. Doubtless that creature's destiny is yet to be fulfilled; and could we read it in the hidden future, I doubt not we should see it fully equal to his large deserts. But, hush, he speaks!" As Broadbrim said this, Boston Bill stepped forward from among his friends, and, addressing the passengers on the quarter-deck, without the least possible abashment, commenced his matter thus—

"I and my friends here have come aft to do a little business; but, as time's rather of the shortest, perhaps you'll let us know who is spokesman on your side, that we may get this matter over at once. All that my friends have got to say they have asked me to say for them. And in all these kinds of councils, as it shortens business, and is the best mode of proceeding, you Britishers, if you be Britishers, had better do the same. And if there's any Yankees among you, I know they will all be my way of thinking, seeing the Yankees are a right down go-ahead kind of enlightened representative people, or else they wouldn't be able to whip the British, while the Britishers whipt the world."

"Favour us with as little of that nonsense as you can, fellow," said St. John, stepping forward, apparently in no mood to banter these kinds of jests. "Gentlemen," said he, addressing the rest of the passengers, "is it your pleasure to follow the suggestion just thrown out to you, and appoint a speaker to treat for the ransom, as this person suggests?"

"Friend," replied Broadbrim, "as the money respecting which we are to treat is thine, and as thou hast finally prevented us from having any voice in its defence, we cannot do better than appoint thyself to debate how or in what manner it shall be surrendered."

This proposition having met with universal approval, Mr. St. John replied—

"Since that is the opinion of those who are entitled to my best consideration, I accept, without any hesitation, the office I am asked to discharge. And now, sir," turning to Boston Bill, "what are the terms you are instructed to accept for the safe delivery to his friends of Major Symonds?"

"Oh, our answer's very short," said the seaman, laughing. "We have all of us forward a wonderful affection for you gentlemen aft; therefore all we want you to give us is your money. After that you may not only have your friend safe and sound, but go where you like with him, and do what you like with him."

"But where will you go?" demanded St. John.

"Don't you trouble your head about that," replied the other, "that's our business."

"Surely you won't desert the ship, and leave her without hands to work the passage home?"

"As to who may come or who may stay behind," said Boston

Bill, "that's a matter on which I've not been instructed to say anything, and if you are a wise man you'll not attempt to ask it, that's more : but this I would advise you to do, and that is, to count upon having as few in crew to work you home as may be, for you won't see many, that's a fact."

"But how is it possible that any boat can live in this sea?"

"Once more, I tell you, that's our business ; just leave every man to manage for himself, and you'll do a deal wiser than you seem likely to do at present. Now these are all the terms that we ask, and we'll have no less."

"Pray, may I ask, have you not implicit faith in my word, as I see you rely upon it sufficiently to venture aft here to debate this matter?"

"Why, yes," replied Boston Bill to St. John's inquiry, "we've got as much faith, perhaps, as we have in most men, I dare say ; we might contrive to give you credit : why do you ask the question?"

"For this reason, man : that if you'll promise to remain on board, you and your men, peaceably, and work the ship, I would transfer into your possession the trumpery gold that is on board now, so that should be no temptation to you to behave ill again ; and on our arrival in England, you shall be handsomely paid for your labours."

"Yes, I dare say—with a halter," interrupted the Bostonian, finishing the sentence.

"Oh," rejoined St. John, "if your suspicion is so strong as that, we need not discuss the matter any farther. It was only under a misapprehension of your trusting to my word that I made the offer ; as you cannot, however, do that, let us proceed with our business."

"It isn't that I mistrust you, old boy," said the seaman ; "but what would your word assist us, I should like to know, if so be we got boarded by a king's frigate off the Land's End, or any one else chose to split upon what has taken place on board here ? All you could do and say wouldn't prevent us going up to the yard-arm, and in pretty quick time too, I can tell you. No—there's nothing further than to hand out the shiners, and let us cut stick with them where we please ; and, for fear you should make any mistake in the amount that's coming to us, we may as well tell you at once that we know all about it—it's an amount of seventy-six thousand pounds," looking at a memorandum which he had in his hand.

"You are wrong—you are wrong ; it's only seventy-five," roared Ebenezer, darting forward.

"You give me the lie again, you cowardly lubber, and see if I don't put some of your teeth down your throat," was the only answer given by Boston Bill to this interruption.

Happening to have seen the insult that Ebenezer had received

from St. John, and the craven way in which he bore it, and knowing, moreover, that, in all the struggles that had taken place, Ebenezer had never been the man to render his assistance, the mutineers, one and all, entertained the most thorough contempt for him.

"Hold, friend," said Broadbrim, stepping up; "before thee usest threats of violence, remember this is a conference at which we are all met to hold good our words, that no broil takes place."

"Well, well, I was wrong there, I admit," said the Bostonian; "but I wish for none of this chap's gammon, for I know right well what's the amount of gold that this steamer has on board. It's seventy-six thousand pounds; and I won't be content with a farthing less."

"Here's a pretty tarnation go! You see what comes of it, Britisher. Your offer to give up your property brings upon me the loss of mine; but, may I perpetually be blown right up and down, round, square, and straight an end, but I never will give up mine! I swear that's a fact—so I tell you."

"Oh, you won't, won't you?" said Boston Bill, who seemed to receive this announcement with great coolness; "we'll see that presently. Go on, sir," turning to Mr. St. John, and perceiving that he wished to speak.

"I was merely going to observe," said Mr. St. John, "that the offer I have made of giving up property on board relates only to my own, which, as this man has stated, is not seventy-six, but simply seventy-five thousand pounds."

"There, you hear what he says," roared Ebenezer. "Now, after that, I guess, as a freeborn American, you'll respect my rights."

"You be d——!" said Boston Bill, returning this adjuration with an oath; "I tell you, we'll talk to you by-and-by." Then turning to St. John—"Now, sir, we know that this money is kept in a small hold beneath the saloon; and, as we are quite agreed upon the terms on which we are to have it, it's only necessary for us to see it counted out here, to deliver up your friend to you at once, all right and tight as ever he was."

"As to counting the money, that we'll do if you please. It is here on board, in the same sealed boxes in which it came from the bankers who I employed to pack it for me, so I presume that it's all right in amount."

"Yes, no doubt it is, if you say so, sir. But my friends here would rather just have a sight of the gold, to see that it's all snug. Mistake, sir, you know, might have been made by the agent."

"Oh! very well—just as you please. Perhaps you will be good enough to take the trouble of bringing it up."

"With all the pleasure in life, sir; with all the pleasure in life. It is rather heavy, as you may know, perhaps; and so I brought two good stout fellows here on purpose, to save you and your friends unnecessary trouble."

"It's very kind of you, I'm sure," returned the old gentleman, bowing, as if he felt the honour extremely, and unable to suppress a smile at the impudent knave's audacity. "Conduct the matter as you will, I have only one hint to give you. No doubt you are a very amiable, instructing set of fellows, but the less you indulge me with your society and contact the better I shall be pleased."

"No doubt, sir; no doubt," rejoined Boston Bill; "but, as I said before, let us once get hold of your money, and we'll indulge you to a nicety. Perhaps some of these persons"—pointing to the passengers on deck—"will show my gentlemen the way to the hold below where the ready is kept. I myself will remain on deck, with your permission."

And, as Boston Bill said this, he very deliberately drew out one of his double-barrelled pistols and cocked it.

"Pray, what is that for?" said old St. John.

"Why," replied the other, "one among so many might be poor odds, without this little assistance."

"Oh, I see," returned St. John, in his dry, quiet manner, "you are afraid."

The colour appeared to come even through the black paint of the mutineer, when he heard this sarcasm on his conduct, and, after a moment's reflection, putting back the pistol once more into his belt, though without uncocking it, he replied—

"No, not so much afraid either; only it's as well to be on your guard sometimes."

"Yes," rejoined St. John—"pray keep the pistol out. I see now how the mistake of treachery arose. You imagined you were among your friends."

Never was the aphorism of cutting blocks with a razor better exemplified. Conscious that he was laughed at, yet not knowing why, the Bostonian looked extremely puzzled by what had just been said to him, but, making no reply to it, he ordered his two men to go below with Herbert, who undertook to conduct them. One of the two stooped down to carry the golden loads, while the other remained as a guard over him to see that he was not surprised.

CHAPTER LIX.

“ Bear to the mint my warm and beating heart,
To drachmas measure out my vital blood,
Rather than touch one guinea of my gold.”

At this period of the transaction one or two bonnets were seen issuing from the saloon, and Nautila appeared on deck, accompanied by two ladies whom she had persuaded to come up and take a peep at the mutineers ; and as she, all lightness, grace, and beauty, stood upon the same deck with the fierce and brutal Boston Bill, a stronger contrast could scarcely have been imagined.

Herbert at first tried to persuade her to go below. To this she would by no means listen, nor did her father appear to wish it. Following the same eccentric views that had guided him entirely throughout her education, he did not object to any knowledge that would tend to make her aware of danger in any shape, or assist her to meet it ; saying, as a reason, to Herbert, that though this might possibly give a somewhat masculine turn to her ideas, it would better enable her, who had no brother, to act the part of her own protector in the world.

In a few minutes the first detachment of gold made its appearance. The specie had been sent on board in nine chests, containing about two hundred weight each. These made the seventy-five thousand pounds belonging to St. John. The solitary thousand of Ebenezer's was, of course, made up in an infinitely smaller package, and had as yet escaped the actual clutch of the pirates ; and strong hopes arose in the bosom of the worthy Wire, that he should be able to save it altogether from their merciless gripe.

Under such circumstances, it is quite clear Ebenezer must have entertained a high notion of his own eloquence ; since, if save his gold he did, talking was the only extravagance of which he intended to be guilty in accomplishing his object.

Hanging over the companion-ladder with an eagerness to which it is utterly impossible to do justice, he watched the advent of the seaman, as he brought the treasure on deck, with a glance in which there seemed to be centred the whole hopes or anguish of his existence. Groaning under the burthen in a way that fully proved the severity of its weight, the powerful mutineer who

bore it on his shoulders gradually ascended to the deck, his companion, who watched over his safety, following him with his drawn knife in his hand.

Every one fell back as they approached, and the load having been set down, Boston Bill produced from his person a hammer, which it now appeared he had brought with him for the purpose, together with a chisel, and applying these to the top of the first chest, they soon raised the lid, and discovered to the admiring gaze of the bystanders the little gods of European idolatry, which are more generally known among us by the title of "ingots of gold."

There they were laid one upon another so invitingly, no one present could help admiring them, while it seemed more than doubtful whether the mutineers might not at once fall down and proceed to worship them. Ebenezer himself did plunge upon his knees beside the chest, but Boston Bill hit his hand a tremendous rap on the knuckles, saying, as he did so—

"Paws off, Pompey!"

"I guess you're a pretty tarnation ruffian you are," said Ebenezer, snarling like a whipped cur, as he passively drew back his hand, flipping it with pain, and showing his long fangs in a manner that greatly amused the spectators. "I only wanted to ring one ingot against another, to see that they were good metal, for your sake. But there are some people so precious superfine ungrateful, there's no doing anything for them, and that's a fact."

"Wait till we come to your chest, Ebenezer, and make yourself scarce until then," said Boston Bill; at one word all but freezing Wire's heart's-blood.

"Here, Bo," turning to his friend, "you run down into the fore-hatchway, and fetch me the spring weighing-machine, which you will find on the top of my chest; for hang me if I haven't forgot it after all."

While these various operations were going on with the mutineers, it may easily be imagined, that sundry and divers comments were being made by the spectators around. Most of them couldn't help laughing at the fixed determination of the proprietor of this fortune thus to abandon it; not a few looked at it with covetous eyes, wishing they had only a portion of the golden spoil safely conveyed to England: while all looked from time to time at the singular old man, who, with his back turned to the mast, contemplated, with a look of infinite contempt, the persons of those who were so busy in appropriating his effects.

Perhaps of all the parties assembled there, he whose chief loss this was looked on with the most cool indifference as to what became of that wealth which others so highly prized. His daughter, indeed, might have shared this distinction with him, since she appeared actually to be highly diverted by the surround-

ing circumstances which accompanied the abandonment of those riches to which she was the heiress.

"Here, Ebenezer," said Boston Bill, as soon as his companions had gone for the weighing-machine, "I know you are fond of handling the tin; and, as it appears you want a job, you shall have one. Just stoop down upon the deck, and count out the number of those ingots. But, mark you, my man, if I see you trying to pop any into your pouch, it shall be the worst day's work you ever did."

"If you use that sort of talk to me, I shall be kinder harder to you, I can tell you," returned Ebenezer. "Count your gold yourself! After all you have said, you don't much deserve that I should do it for you."

Then, presently, as if the temptation was too great for him to resist, he knelt down and busied himself most assiduously in counting out the number of ingots the chest contained. There they lay spread out upon the bare deck, and answering in tally to the number written on a card, and pasted inside the lid.

The pleasure that Ebenezer seemed to feel in this occupation was almost indescribable. He took out each shiny bar with as much tenderness and care as if it were a newly-born infant; some who knew him said, with more than he would have shown had it been a human being, weighing them over with fond delight, and gazing with as much affection almost as if they had been his own. Several of the other passengers also took an ingot or two in their hand with a sort of sigh, as if they lamented the abandonment which had been forced upon them.

One of the young men took one up to Broadbrim, proffering it him to weigh, but the quaker, simply remarking that it was the root of all evil, declined any further acquaintance with it. As for Mr. St. John, neither by word nor look did he interfere with any passing opinion.

It a few minutes the seaman who had been sent for the spring weighing-machine returned with that instrument in his hand; and Boston Bill, having weighed three or four of the bars at random, proceeded to make a calculation upon the back of an old letter on his hat as to what ought to be the value of the box.

"I guess you are a pretty considerable go-ahead sort of a chap, you are," said Ebenezer, who seemed bent, if possible, to make friends with the mammon of unrighteousness; "and you're pretty considerable quick to cipher, you are."

"Come, you move off about your business; you won't gammon me, so you needn't try it. Just put in the whole of them ingots again," said the Bostonian, pointing with his finger to the gold, while Ebenezer, who, for the sake of his own money, seemed afraid of making an enemy of the brute who thus commanded him, at once complied.

This done the lid was once more refixed in a rude manner.

Boston Bill, who appeared prepared for all dispatch of business, took a piece of chalk out of his pocket, and scoring number one on the box, put it on one side, where it could be under his own especial surveillance. This done, he turned round to his assistants, saying,—

“Now, then, up with the other boxes as fast as you can; there is no time to be lost, you know.”

And in compliance with this order, they at once dived below, and chest after chest rapidly made its appearance.

CHAPTER LX.

“ ‘Who steals my purse steals trash,’ was once the word,
But Father Shakespeare now grows quite absurd;
And the new reading goes, ‘Who steals my purse,
Does that than which no human crime is worse.’ ”

FROM time to time the interesting operations we have described would be stopped for a few minutes, while Boston Bill selected at random a box to open, and counted over its contents. Fortunately, whenever this was done, the examination proved satisfactory, and at last nine of them stood ranged before him.

“Now, then, there only remains one more,” said the man of Boston, snapping his fingers aloft, as though he should say, “I’ve pretty near got rid of a dirty business, and done a good day’s work.”

“More! no, there are no more,” cried Ebenezer; “you’ve got them all; there’s the seventy-five thousand pounds that this gentleman gave you.”

“That’s all very fine, Ebenezer; but there’s your one thousand to come yet, which you don’t give us, you know; and that’s the dearest of it all, for stolen fruit is ever the sweetest.”

“Stolen!” suddenly shrieked Ebenezer, in reply; “you precious, eternal, tarnation, superfine thieves and robbers, it’s all stolen!—it’s all plundered—it’s all robbed, and that’s a fact! Stand off—off, I say! I’ve got a bowie-knife as well as the best of you; and I’ll use it too, in defence of my precious gold, that’s

a fact! You shall have my life-blood first, you shall! Haven't you got enough, you eternal, thundering, thievish-bred mutineers!"

And as Ebenezer gave utterance to this bold defiance, wrung from time to time by the extremity of the moment, he whipped from beneath his jacket an instrument of the kind he named, and brandished it aloft with a fierceness and energy that seemed as if he really would use its keen edge rather than be parted from what appeared to him, as he said, dearer than his life.

"Ebenezer Wire," slowly and sternly answered the leader, "I have heard of you before to-day for a cowardly, hard-hearted, white-livered old screw, as you know yourself to be; and even if you had the soul to use that bit of steel in the way you talk, which you know, as well as I do, you have not, even then, I say, what chance would you stand against any one of us three, let alone all? Therefore, be advised by me; I advise you like a father. Now, don't be a cantankerous, contumacious, old hound to the last, but stand aside, and let my men fetch up your gold-box, or if you don't——"

"Well, then, you sir—what then?"

"Receive the contents of this through your head."

And the Bostonian, drawing from his belt a pistol that was still cocked, presented it full at the other.

"Don't! Take it down—it makes me kinder—nastier! I don't like them things—they rile me quite, that's a fact!"

And Ebenezer tried to move his head out of the line of fire; but the Bostonian, following the motions of his victim, still kept the muzzle fully pointed at the other's eye.

"Move out of the way, Ebenezer, or I'll pull the trigger?"

"Hold!" shouted Mr. St. John, advancing with his rifle, and forsaking the attitude of indifference he had hitherto maintained; "the first drop of passenger's blood that you spill upon the deck during the truce, to which we have all agreed, is a signal for the death of all three of you, though these hands undertake the task."

"That is, if you can do it, old gentleman. Two can play at that fun, and that's a fact, as our friend Ebenezer would say."

"It is, ruffian," rejoined St. John, with a stern and haughty dignity of eye that made the larger man quail beneath it; and now I'll tell you another fact to add to it, which is this: you and I have played at that game before, and the end of it is, that you carry, if I mistake not, one of my bullets in your ankle, and another of Major Symonds's in your jaw, at this moment. Bethink you, then—the hand that could lodge those there with so unsteady a mark may, with a better opportunity, throw the next into your thick skull. And as for you, sir," turning to Ebenezer Wire, "since you seem so reluctant to part with your gold to save the life of a fellow-creature——"

"Fellow-critter!" interposed Ebenezer. "And who, I should like to know, would interpose to save my life from starving, if I'm so soft and so little a go-ahead kind of chap as to let go my gold, that's what I want to know? That 'ere thousand pounds below is all my arnings, I tell you; it's all I've got in the creation, that's a fact."

"It's a lie, Ebenezer, and that you know," interrupted Boston Bill.

"I—I—I," repeated Ebenezer, evidently much confused, "I know nothing of the sort. How should you know what I am worth—a robber, a plunderer, a superfine mutineer like you? Besides, who'll believe a single word that a double-milled rascal like you can utter, that's what I want to know?"

"You'd better mend your manners, Mr. Ebenezer, if you want your days to be long in the land," muttered the mutineer between his clenched teeth, making, at the same time, a significant motion with his pistol.

"Peace, peace," interposed Mr. St. John, lifting his hand. "If you will both of you listen to me for a few minutes, I think I can make an arrangement that will suit all parties."

CHAPTER LXI.

"Ten thousand ducats, and Antonio bound!"

Merchant of Venice.

HAD the steamer been suddenly anchored in the Downs, close under the broadside of an English frigate, it could scarcely have produced, in the minds of the contending arguers, more surprise than did the words last uttered by Mr. St. John—something that should suit the views of both parties. What magical panacea could this be?

Already, from all that had passed, they conceived him to be rather a wonderful superfine sort of chap, decidedly quite insane, but yet vastly clever; but what could even he do to reconcile the views of both parties?

With open mouths and expectant eyes the angry and inflamed countenances of both the Bostonian and Ebenezer were now turned full upon him.

"Do you," said he, addressing the latter, "object to giving up the thousand pounds of yours, even to save the life of the gallant officer who has been taken prisoner by the mutineers?"

"Do I object!" roared Wire, all his fury appearing to return. "Do I stand in my skin? Of course I object. What's his life to me? I care no more for it than I do for the rind of a rusty side of bacon—that's a fact; that is, compared with my thousand pounds. Why should I?—that's what I want to know."

"I don't attempt to reason with persons of your principle, sir," said the other, with marked displeasure; the answer you have given me is enough. Now, hear the proposal I have to make. If you will give up your thousand pounds of gold in the peaceable way in which I have resigned mine, I'll give you my cheque for the whole amount, payable by the Bank of England, the moment you reach the British shores."

An involuntary exclamation of admiration was heard on all sides at this fresh proof of Mr. St. John's generosity. Even the rude mutineer stared at him with a degree of wonderment that denoted the intenseness of the feeling that such a proposal called forth. Ebenezer alone appeared untouched by it.

"What!" said he, "do you think it's likely that I, an enlightened American, one of the regular go-aheads, will give up my thousand pounds in hard gold for your trumpery, halfpenny,

precious, superfine brown-paper check? Who are you—that's what I want to know—that I should take your flimsy bit of paper for my hard gold? No—never—never—that's what I won't. A pretty proposition to make!"

"You need say no more, sir," said Mr. St. John. "I asked you a question on a matter calculated rather more to your advantage than to mine, as I thought. You have answered it. I made you an offer, and you have declined it. Nothing more need be said between us. I am quite sure that there can be no feeling in common between us, and therefore there is the less necessity for anything like a discussion. There's only one thing I will add, which is this—there is now on board, as I am informed, a gentleman who is an American lawyer. If you prefer it, as a species of security, notwithstanding the elegance of the assertions to which you have given utterance, I shall still be happy either to give you a bond for the capital of your thousand pounds, or, if you please, a large annuity for it; or an annuity on landed estates for the joint lives of myself and daughter. Would that satisfy your doubts, and reconcile you to part with your gold?"

"No," roared Ebenezer, "it won't; nothing shall reconcile me to parting with my gold. Not all that you could offer shall induce me; and, once more, I'm sure you've lost quite enough to beggar you already, without saying anything about any more—that's what you have. Look at that," pointing to the heap of chests—"look at that, Britisher, and gnash your teeth; there lies seventy-five thousand pounds worth of as good gold as ever was made into guineas at the Mint; and all that you've not only lost by your folly, but have led on these thieves, these plunderers, to ask me for mine."

And here Ebenezer seemed to get into a perfect state of frenzy at the thought of parting with his money, and growing, above all things, suddenly religious, in his wrath he added, by way of a finisher, "But the Lord, he will requite you for this deed some day—see if he don't: that's what he will, I guess."

As Wire, with outstretched hand came to this peroration, Mr. St. John, with a look of despair and disgust, fell back to the original position in which he had been standing, when a desire to save the miser's life induced him to step forward, with what result we have already seen. Boston Bill, who was by no means slow in marking that which was for his own interest, seemed at once to gather from this movement of the old gentleman that Ebenezer was now delivered back into his tender care: with a significant motion of his pistol-butt, he now addressed the unhappy man in a half-jocular manner, saying,—

"Come, Ebenezer, since you've now fully had your say, it's time for us to have your gold, so stand aside, and let us fetch it, that's a man."

"Stand back, you murdering, thieving villain—stand back!"

retorted Ebenezer, fully blocking up the hatchway-ladder, and flourishing his steel anew, and then turning to the other passengers around: "Is there no gentleman here that will assist a free-born citizen to defend his rights—to defend his property, I may say, and his life?—that's a fact. You, captain, come now, captain, you're a rael brave dare-devil, go-ahead, American—I call upon you as the captain acting in command of this ere steamer, to protect my property against this murdering, thieving, plundering villain of a mutineer—that's what I do."

"And I answer you, Mr. Wire," said Herbert, with infinite contempt in his manner, "with this reply—I have heard a most kind and liberal offer made to you by Mr. St. John, which would have secured to you every farthing of the money you are so fond of, and more too, without the slightest risk. But when told that the temporary parting with your property, under such circumstances, would tend to preserve the life of a gallant officer, esteemed by all of us, your reply was—'that you cared no more for his life than you did for a rind of rusty bacon.' Now, that's just the amount I care for your money, and no more:" and Herbert turned his back on him.

"Very well—very well, Mr. Lieutenant," replied Wire, abandoning his former tone of flattery for one of menace; "I know who you are, *I* do, I tell *you*. You're a lieutenant in our navy, that's what you are—that's a fact. I'll report you to Congress—that's what I will. Clay is a particular friend of mind, and so is Danel Webster—that's a fact. You're a reglar acting captain of this ship, and have thought fit to take upon you to act as sich. So now mind me, mister, if I lose my money, I'll go at you with a right reglar up-and-down, straight-an-end suit for the whole of it; and Danel himself shall plead for me—that's what *he* shall. You'll be pretty tarnation catawompously chawed up when you get Danel about you, *you* will; he'll hug you as a bear does a plumcake, he will. But I won't waste my time on such as you. Now, Mr. Quaker," turning to Broadbrim, "you're a rael gentleman; *you* have some conscience, and a pretty tarnation considerable broad pair of shoulders to back it, and as brave a heart as ever warmed a Christian, I reckon. I ask you, then, will you stand by and see a poor man like me robbed by such a pretty considerable superfine villain as this?" pointing to Boston Bill. "No, that you won't, I guess, will you? You'll stand up for my defence, won't you?"

"Why, friend, is it not our duty to do unto our neighbours as we would they should do unto us?"

"Ay!" exclaimed Ebenezer, in a voice of joy, "there's where you've just hit it; that's just the rael argument that I've been trying for the last ten minutes to chance on, that's a fact; only I've been so riled by the way, I've been circumnavigated. To be sure, sir, just teach these gentlemen that that's what their duty

is, and not to see a poor man like me robbed in this way, but to stand by me, out and out, and no mistake. You've got hold of the right end of the stick, *you* have. It *is* our duty to do to our neighbours as we would our neighbours should do to us, and no mistake; just teach it to these misters, here."

"Nay, nay, friend, the lesson is good, I grant, but it must be taught, not to them, but to thee. When neighbour St. John's seventy-five thousand pounds were in jeopardy, didst thou come and fight for his little peculiar, as thou now wantest him and us to fight for thine?"

"I!" gasped Ebenezer, direfully taken aback, when he found that the moral of the sermon pointed against himself. "I! Mr. Quaker."

"Yes, friend, thee. Didst thou come up and do battle for thy neighbour's goods, as thou wantest thy neighbour to do for thine? I see thou canst not answer the question, therefore I will for thee. Of a verity thou didst not. Thou heardest the din of the conflict, and was told of thy friends' and neighbours' danger, but all thou didst in their behalf was to remain away as far as thou couldst get, and hide thy nose as deep as it might be in the blankets; and though, of a chance, thou camest once upon the deck, thou no sooner sawest a possibility of thy being useful, than thou didst run away again incontinently. The measure, therefore, thou gavest unto others, the same must in justice be meted unto thee. Thou wouldst not protect neighbour St. John's gold, thou canst not expect us to protect thine;" and seating himself on the cabin skylight, friend Broadbrim crossed his hands in that peculiar fashion which quakers have adopted, in order quietly to convey what other people express by an improper phrase, *videlicet*, "You may be d—d, for aught I care!"

"There, Ebenezer, what do you think of that? you see you've got no friends, and you can't make a fight alone. Why don't you let us go down peaceably and get your chest? You know very well you've some ten or twelve at home yonder, to replace the loss of it."

"It's a lie! I haven't," fiercely replied Ebenezer; "I haven't another farthing in the world, you know I haven't."

Then suddenly altering in his manner, he clasped his hands, and lifting them towards heaven, exclaimed, in the most whining, canting, tone of voice—

"Oh! the stony-hearted butchers! Oh! the Horeb-without-water-flinty-hearted murderers! What shall I do? What shall I do?" Then suddenly throwing himself upon his knee, and clasping the unwounded leg of the leader, "Oh Mr. Boston! dear Mr. Boston! You wouldn't take it from me, would you now? What is one thousand pounds among you all, when you have already such a princely fortune, such a king's ransom I may say? But for me; think what a heart-breaking loss it would be; it is

my all; indeed, indeed, it is. It is not only my property, but wife and children too, and more than both. These hands," stretching them out, and shaking them in the frenzy of his appeal, "these hands worked day and night, night and day, to earn it. All my life through I have struggled sore with hard misfortune to get a little money together, and now I have just managed, with great effort, to sweep this little sum up, bit by bit, for a particular venture in the old country, among the Britishers; you wouldn't, you couldn't have the cruelty to take it from me."

"Oh, no, not at all; certainly not, I guess," replied Boston Bill, with a grin of derision, and seeming to enjoy the sport of being thus worshipped for his power, while the other remained wholly ignorant of the spirit of the words, and continued blindly imploring for that which the other was determined not to grant.

"Oh, no, you couldn't, I'm sure, take it from me, if you had seen the agony, the misery, the suffering that has been endured to amass that little sum; my wife died toiling to add to it; my children—my children—ay, even my very children were famished—ay, starved, by the stinting necessary to swell the store from our small earnings. And now my wife is gone, my children are lost to me, and nothing but my gold remains. It was purchased by their blood—it was augmented by their lives—it is all that I have left to me of them in the universal world. I love it—I worship it. You do not know the cruelty you contemplate. No! I would die ten thousand deaths before you should rob me of my gold."

And, worked to a pitch of madness, Ebenezer made a spring with his knife at the throat of Boston Bill, just as a cat or tiger would leap up to assault its prey. But the mutineer, who had seen the madness momentarily growing in the other's eye, just lifted his sound foot, and kicking it against Ebenezer's breast, the latter was thrown sprawling some feet from him, on the quarter-deck, his heavy and glittering knife detached from his grasp, and himself lying unarmed, at the power of his merciless enemy.

"Seize that sticker," said Boston Bill, pointing to the weapon for one of his men to pick up, and taking two strides towards the prostrate Ebenezer, he once more pulled out his pistol, and presented it at his head as a constable would shoot a mad dog. In another instant Ebenezer would have ceased to struggle in the world of realities; while, however, Boston Bill was in the very act of committing this unheeded murder, he was arrested by a voice so quiet, so calm in its tone, yet withal so stern, no wonder he held his hand.

"Remember, sir!" cried St. John, cocking his rifle.

Boston Bill turned at the sound, and beheld the unerring barrel of the exile pointed at his head.

"Well, I don't want to hurt the vermin, if he won't stand in our way," said the Bostonian, once more returning the weapon to his belt, as he read in the eye of the old man that immovable determination that plainly indicated the danger of trifling with such a customer. "Here, Bill, seize this fool, and clap a fathom of inch-and-a-half round his wrists," he continued, turning to one of his satellites, who sprang upon Ebenezer with a rope's end, before he had quite recovered from the stunning effects of his fall, and in less than a minute he was fast bound a prisoner.

CHAPTER LXII.

"But where, O where the devil are the rents!"

BYRON.

FROM the sketches, faint as they are, which we have been enabled to give of Ebenezer Wire, and the vigour with which he strove to save his treasure, it may, perhaps, be better imagined than told with what repeated, but vain imprecations he bewailed his fate, and doomed that of all other people. When he returned to his senses, and, though perfectly impotent himself, beheld his darling treasure brought up from below, and rudely disclosed to the eyes of those who had taken forcible possession of it, loud as his cries certainly were, the only consolation that awaited him was the most perfect permission to indulge in them to the utmost, and this he certainly had leave to enjoy, having unfortunately sunk to that point of public estimation in which people are allowed, in the perfect freedom of contempt, to say just what they please.

"Now, sir, that you have possession of every particle of specie that I promised you," said St. John, addressing the chief mutineer, "I trust that the moment has at length arrived for instantly liberating your prisoner."

"Why," replied Boston Bill, "I must say, sir, the straightforward manner in which you have behaved deserves that we should do everything to accommodate you that lies in our power; and so I will. I've no objection to take your friend out of that beautiful pillory forward, and send him down below, where he will be well taken care of. But as a matter of precaution for *my*

friends, I left orders to that man you see standing by the rope, that, if we were attacked here aft, the first thing that he should do should be to blow *your* friend's brains out with the pistol he holds in his hand. Now, therefore, you understand, as your friend's a kind of hostage, that we shan't be molested till we've got his ransom quite safe, why, I'm afraid I must just keep possession of your friend's person until our gentlemen are ready to leave the ship, and then of course we'll set him loose; but in the mean time, sir, you may rest assured he shall be made quite comfortable. Holloa! forward there; cast that gentleman's neck out of the noose, and take him down below, and make him comfortable; but you needn't let go his hands until further orders; and if in meanwhile you should chance to hear us set upon aft here, you can blow his brains out, as before."

Then turning to old St. John, "there, sir, I suppose that's all you desire?"

"Perhaps it's all I could expect," returned the old gentleman, drawing a marvellous distinction.

"Well, I'm sure, sir, you're not the gentleman to ask us to do what you can't expect," returned the unabashed Bostonian; "would you now?"

"No, sir."

"Now, my boys," turning to his men, "bear a hand here, and convey this money down into the waist, while I stand aft here on the quarter-deck and keep a watch after things in general."

"Well, Master Boston Bill," said Herbert, going up to him, "now that the fray seems pretty nearly over, just allow me to thank you for all your kind intentions on my behalf."

"You," said the other, looking round at Herbert, with a grim smile. "It was never no use having kind intentions towards such a chap as you, you don't meet them half way; but it's the old story,—them as is born to be hanged will never have their throats cut."

"Oh, as to having my throat cut, by Jove, you didn't intend anything half so good for me; if you'll only overhaul your memory a bit, I think, you must remember, you and your precious friend, Yankee Doodle, arranging to pop me down the engine-room; he proposed the engine-room, I think, and you to drown me alongside."

"Did we, sir? Well, it seems if we did, you've been one too many for us; you're a rather go-ahead sort of chap, you are."

"Yes, things have turned out a little different from what you intended. Shall I tell you what will be the end of it?—Master Yankee Doodle went down into the engine-room, and you'll be drowned."

"Ah, that salt water as is to drown me isn't brewed yet, sir, take my word for it," replied the Bostonian, looking, nevertheless, exceedingly uncomfortable at having his fate thus predicted.

"Well! well! we shall see," replied Herbert, "who's right and who's wrong in the long run. And now you've got this money, Master Bill, may I ask how you intend to carry it?"

"Why, I have no objection to tell you, sir; you're a sharp fellow, you are, and up to a dodge or two, you be. I'll tell you what we'll do with it; we'll pack it all in the launch, cram her pretty tight with provisions, and then make sail straight ahead, for a snug coast that I know of; but that's no matter to you."

"Oh no," said Herbert, "that's the last thing, I thought of finding out, where you were going; I don't trouble my head about such matters as those; it's enough for me to know, that soon or late, you'll all find your way to the devil, that's all I need care about you. I only wanted to know how you thought of starting, as a matter of curiosity in a seaman's eye, seeing that there's such a sea running. The chances are, that your boats won't live ten minutes."

"Won't they? Let me alone for that. I've steered a boat before now, over a sea, to which this is a mere mill-pool, and thought nothing of it. I'll tell you what we shall do; we shall take both the cutters, put half the gold in one, and half in the other, set sail pretty tight, and cut away. I shouldn't care a fig for it, if it wasn't for the gold being so heavy; but we'll manage it somehow or other. Faint heart never won a fair lady."

"I tell you what," said Herbert, "in the way you are talking, with all your boasted knowledge of ships, you and your gold will be in Davy Jones's locker in less than ten minutes after you leave the steamer. Your best plan, if you want to live an hour, much more several days, is to stow all the gold in one cutter, the smallest of the two, then lay a few planks over the top of the chests and nail a couple of good stout tarpaulins over all."

"What, man alive! my heart and soul," said the worthy Welsh parson; "by my honour, I would scarcely have believed this of you, Herbert, instructing such a thrice-dyed villain to escape with his plunder. Surely abilities like yours are given to you for some better purpose than to protect so vile a life as this wretch's."

"Why," said Herbert, "as to the purity of his life, I don't pretend to say much; but I must confess, that I like the bravery of the rascal, though I detest his villany: neither ought you to be angry with me for instructing him how to prolong his guilty existence for a few hours through the terrific sea that's running now. God knows we have all need enough of repentance; and where can this fellow stand so great an opportunity of experiencing that emotion as on the billows of such a raging sea as this, the very masterpiece of the Creator he has passed his life in offending—God?"

"You are wrong, you are altogether wrong," returned Wynne Powell, "how can you tell what further villainies you are assist-

ing him to perpetrate. Let the scoundrel perish from the face of the waters as he deserves, and the sooner the better I say, and I'm sure every one will say with me," turning round and looking towards Nautila, who now came up.

"Why," said the beautiful and fearless girl, "I confess I am rather a convert to Mr. Herbert's view of the case; vengeance belongs to Heaven, and we ought all of us to spare life, which is its peculiar gift and prerogative; therefore if you can instruct these poor wretches how to survive the fury of the gale, I say for one, pray do so; it is nothing more than your duty."

"I confess I take that view of the case myself," replied Herbert, "and so Master Boston Bill, if you'll follow my notions, you see you will, in the manner I have mentioned, contrive to make a sort of tarpaulin-deck to one of the cutters, so that if she ships a sea, none of it will get on board of her; else with all that money on board, the first few bucketfuls of water she took in, she would go down like a teaspoon, and not all your efforts would stop her."

"Well, I guess that's a regular good notion; and what's more, I guess I'll profit by it; as I said afore, you are a regular go-ahead sort of chap, captin, and I likes your seamanship a precious sight better than your preaching, and no mistake. And now since you are such an out-and-out sort of fellow as not to scorn giving advice to an enemy, if I may make so bold, whereabouts are we, captin, by your calculation, as to longitude and latitude, now?"

"Don't you wish you may get it, my boy?" said Herbert, laughing at this question: "to put you up to a wrinkle to save your lives is one thing, but to tell you anything that shall help you to make clear off with your plunder, and avoid the possibility of being captured, is another. You won't catch me up to any of that fun, so don't think it."

"Well, well, captin, quite as you like: you know the thing is easy found out; there is no very great difficulty about it."

"Oh no, none at all," cried Herbert; "just try your hand at it."

"Ay, ay, sir, I've done that before; I know what it is well enough. But what think you, sir? I fancy it would be as well to load the cutter before we lower her down."

"If you don't, you will never do it afterwards," said Herbert.

"Well, I think so too, sir. Let me see, that's the smallest that you were making a sort of bulwark of in the night. Here, my boys, bundle all those mattresses out on the deck one of you, run forward to the fore cabin and bring a couple of the stoutest tarpaulins, a bag full of nails and a hammer, while the other stays with me and packs the gold in snug. Tell them below there forward, to get ready the provisions, for we shall be off in half an hour, and have the arms and all that sort of thing well packed; and remember, I won't wait for the queen herself."

"I'm afraid she's not likely to call upon you for any extra display of your gallantry, Mr. Boston Bill," said Herbert, smiling at this most American piece of independence.

"No sir," returned the other, "I dare say not; and to tell you the truth I should be rather loath to see either her or any of her long pennants while this matter is in hand."

"Why, yes, gentle as the most gracious lady of Great Britain is, I think she would not let you off, without stretching your neck for this day's business," said Herbert.

"Ay, sir, you see that's the worst of what they call the advances of civilization. In those good old times what we read of, it was quite as much as a king could do to protect his own rights, without interfering with the little speculations of other people. Now those German barons, when the great lords had each of them a castle to their own private account, it was held rather an honourable thing than otherwise, to go out with a few retainers and bring home enough fat oxen and wine, to last the castle in victuals for a twelvemonth; but now, as you say, if her Majesty had me at Portsmouth, I have no doubt, she and her'n, in the shape of admirals, captains, and commissioners, and what not, would be for putting to me a number of ugly, awkward, and impertinent questions."

With such gentle sort of pastime and similar discourse, did the Bostonian wile away the time, ever and anon giving a few directions to his subordinates, until the latter had completed the stowing of the gold in the cutter.

"Now," said Herbert, "you have made it pretty snug, you had better clap a few planks along it fore and aft, as a sort of deck, on which to stretch the tarpaulin, and when that is nailed, I think you will have as good an opportunity of trying whether you can live in this sea, as circumstances altogether will permit you."

"And if they can't, why small blame to you at any rate for doing your best to assist them," quoth the Welsh parson, still evidently quite unable to forgive our hero entertaining the least compunction towards his foes.

Herbert replied to this remark, however, with nothing but a smile. If anything had been wanting, beside the approval of his own conscience, at the part he was taking, the few words uttered by Nautila would have sufficed.

The planks were brought aft, and placed over the gold chests, in the manner our hero proposed; a couple of new tarpaulins were then thrown over the whole and nailed all round, the edges turned in and a second set of nails employed.

"There, said Herbert, as he looked on, "if human ingenuity can keep that above water, which however I rather doubt, that will do it."

"It will do, sir, it will," said Boston Bill, who appeared quite delighted with the expedient; "and now we'll stow the other boat

full of provisions and lower her down with most of her crew in her, which I think will be the safest plan, and then the rest may slide down by the falls, and away we go. Bring aft the provisions, boys," calling to his crew, who proceeded immediately to obey him. Divers viands of all descriptions were brought aft and packed in the other cutter which had been got ready for that purpose.

"Now then, I think nothing is wanting but the crew; send the boys aft to take their places in the boat," cried Boston. The call was repeated, and in a few minutes, there issued from the fore cabin nine men, all of them bearing odds and ends, articles wrapped up in black handkerchiefs and what not, which they wished to take with them upon this most forlorn expedition.

As may easily be supposed, all the male cabin passengers, and a great number of the ladies, being assured that there was no danger to be apprehended now, gathered together on deck to gratify the strong curiosity they entertained; not only as to who might be the persons setting out on the frantic crusade after wealth, but as to whether the fears expressed on all sides, of their swamping alongside, would not be realized.

With regard to the curiosity—as to the persons of the avaricious boat's crew, that was doomed to be utterly disappointed, as all the seamen, without any exception, had adopted the expedient of blacking their faces; to say who or what they were was impossible. Whether, therefore, any, or how many of the regular crew of the steamer were involved in the matter, our friends knew as little now as they did on starting; and with the dismal prospect before them, felt scarcely inclined to raise much inquiry on the subject.

One by one the passengers were called over by Boston Bill from a paper given to him by one of his assistants, and each took his seat in answer to his cognomen, all being evidently manufactured names for that purpose, and most of them appearing to have been suggested by the sobriquet of their leader. Thus there was Jem of Sandy Hook, New Yorking Bobby, Hell-gate Jack, and others equally terrifying and unmistakable, and all clearly assumed to mislead the hearers from any possible identification.

At last several of them had taken their seats, and the next was then called by the title of Spooney Sam; but as there was some delay before this worthy made his appearance, the leader took occasion to call out one or two of the stoutest hands from one cutter, and a stout tow-rope having been previously made fast to the bow of the other containing the gold, they proceeded to lower down into the still terrific sea, the bark of all their hopes.

"Forward, there!" said Boston Bill, as a necessary preliminary order, "tell the engineers below, to slacken off the rate of the engine, to let the ship have just steerage-way to keep head to sea and no more."

"Slack her! slack her!" cried the little engine-boy, who now that the weather appeared fairer, and there was once more some demand for his services, again appeared on deck.

Obedient to the pipe of the urchin, the huge engine bellowed forth a volume of steam, the paddles ceased to go round with the rapidity that had hitherto been given to them, and gradually the way of the steamer was stopped, until, as Boston Bill had ordered, she only went ahead at the rate of some two miles an hour, which was just enough to enable her rudder to keep such command over the rude mass, as would still present her bow from sea to sea, and obviate the danger of her falling into the trough of the waves.

This being done, the first cutter was gradually lowered, every one rushing to the side to see the operation, which Boston Bill himself commanded.

The frantic cries of Ebenezer Wire, when he actually saw his darling gold upon the wing, his soul, as it were, departing from his body, and he looking on, unable to avert the direful separation, exceeds all belief; trying his utmost to raise himself on the deck, he continued to bellow out—

"Let me go too! let me go too!"

Until the beloved bark was beyond his sight; then, every species of imprecation his words could frame, were launched out against all parties that he thought at all concerned in his loss; but no one paid the least attention to him, with the exception of Mr. St. John, who, with his hands folded on his breast remained seated, away from all bustle, calmly watching and smiling at the different species of insanity he saw displayed around him, more especially that under which the rified miser appeared to writhe so terrifically. After sitting watching the latter for many moments, he went up to him and said,—

"Are you really in earnest, in wishing to accompany your gold?"

"Oh yes, I am," groaned Ebenezer, clutching at Mr. St. John's hand, with just such an eager, anxious gratitude, as we have seen the sick display on the approach of a physician, in whose abilities they have placed great confidence.

"Oh yes, I do, Mr. St. John; you have great power with these ruffianly scoundrels; get me but this favour, and I shall be eternally obliged to you."

"But do you consider what you ask? In all human probability, ten minutes after these wretches have quitted this ship, they and the plunder which now engrosses them, to the exclusion of all reasonable perception of surrounding difficulties, will have gone to the bottom."

"Oh no, they won't; not if I am on board they won't," cried, almost shrieked, Ebenezer, in the eagerness of his appeal.

"Why, what difference can it possibly make whether you are

on board? You are no sailor, are you? You cannot help them to navigate the boat by any skill unpossessed by themselves."

"No, no, it isn't that," replied Ebenezer; "I am no sailor, I know; it isn't that, Mr. St. John, I tell you; but if I go with them, Heaven, I am sure, for my sake, will delay to punish the iniquities of these wretches. Heaven is just, and Heaven, I am sure, would never separate a widowed husband and a childless father, from the only hope or affection now left to him on earth. Oh, no; it wouldn't; it couldn't, I'm sure. Oh, tell the wretches this! You only require to speak—to command. Oh, let me go with my gold; I would rather die with it, sink with it, than live on here; ay, or even be saved without it. Tell them, Heaven would protect them for my sake, if they would but let me go with my property."

"I could tell them nothing half so impious—nothing half so foolish; and I still hope that you will have too much good sense to throw away your life in such folly. If anything could call down the wrath of Heaven on your expedition, which it must be presumed has already so little to plead for it in that high quarter, it would be the odious spectacle of seeing an old man, who should be preparing to render his final account to his Creator, preferring to spend the miserable remnant of his existence in consorting with villains of the deepest dye, for the protection of a trivial hoard, from which he can gain no reasonable enjoyment himself, and to which he is obliged to confess that he has no heir to succeed."

"You're a fool! you're a fool! you're a madman, sir! I won't listen to you." Already forgetting how tenderly he had, a few minutes since, implored Mr. St. John's interposition to gain him the favour of embarking with his money. No sooner, however, did he see the old gentleman once turn to depart, than coming to his senses, he cried out in renewed agony of voice, "Don't leave me! don't leave me, sir, I implore you; in anger I know not what I said. Don't ask me to contemplate staying behind while they carry off my gold; it drives me mad to think of it; but unless you wish to see me perish raving here, insist that these villains take me with them. You owe me this—you must feel you owe it me. If it hadn't been for your mad, your insane offer to give up your own gold, I never should have been called upon to surrender mine."

"Well, there is some truth, perhaps, in that," said Mr. St. John, "and, with a feeling of that sort it was I offered to repair the injury you have sustained, by giving you a cheque for the whole amount of your loss; only you were so foolish as to refuse it. On my honour, as a gentleman, you would only have had to present the cheque at any banker's in England, to receive, at furthest by return of post, the whole amount of the gold, the loss of which

now appears to afflict you so bitterly. Once more I make you that offer; if you will give up this vain and absurd bemoaning, I will at once give you the cheque I have mentioned."

"I won't have it, sir, I told you. I don't know who you are, and I know nothing of your cheque. It might be as good as the Bank of England, and it might be good for nothing. I never have done business in that way, and I won't begin now. For all the injury your conduct has brought upon me, all I ask is, that you should cast me loose from these cords, and allow me to take my chance in that boat with those who are trying to rob me of all I possess. Surely, you are bound to make me this return. You are, you are, indeed."

"Well," returned the old man, taking out his penknife, "I know no reason why you should not now be set at liberty; more especially, as my only reason for permitting you ever to be bound up, was simply to prevent bloodshed, in the vain defence of that which we could not preserve. So, hold out your arms, and I will cut your cords. But, remember, I counsel you against venturing in this sea until the last moment. If you choose to repent of your absurd project, and will take your lot with me, I am still willing to replace all your losses."

"I don't want it, I don't want it," eagerly muttered Ebenezer, whose eye bore the sparkle of a maniac, while Mr. St. John's penknife cut through the numerous folds of rope, by which the seamen appeared to have thought they were binding a Hercules, muttering, as his deliverer cast him loose,—

"How I shall pray for you! how I shall bless you, even in my dreams! We shall only be twelve of us, after all, in the boat, and there will be seventy-six thousand pounds to divide among us. That, I calculate, isn't far away from six thousand four hundred pounds apiece. Bless you, my dear sir; bless you. Make haste. There are one or two things in my cabin that I want to save. Why I shall be richer, after all, than if this had never happened, and I had gone among the Britishers, and succeeded in my venture. I should only have made about four thousand pounds, even then, I guess; and, now, I shall make six thousand four hundred. My Gore! what a cipher! Oh, what I will make of that when I once get safe back to New York! Of course, Mister, you will give as much to me as you will to any other of the men who go in the boat;" and Ebenezer paused, after his hands were cast loose, not to thank, as might have been expected, the man who had just set him free, but to ask this question, before he hurried to his cabin.

"I'll give you nothing," solemnly replied Mr. St. John, "but this sensible piece of advice. Beware how you trust your life in the power of those men, any one of whom would, without scruple, deprive you of it, for the slightest share of even six shillings, much less of six thousand pounds; or, even permitting you to have a

share in your own money, much less in mine; so look to it. You are blinded by your avarice, and, in all probability, will neglect the warning. But if so, hear what will be your fate. The instant you are clear of our observation, or perhaps, I might more properly say, the reach of our rifles, so that we could not revenge your fall, these mutineers, if you are mad enough to venture into their boat, will doubtless throw your body overboard to lighten their burden, and there leave you to feed the fishes."

"You think so, do you, master," said Ebenezer, with a look of extreme cunning. "Then, I can tell you I'm jist the chap to be kinder even with them. I'm a cute go-ahead chap, I reckon. I am none of your slow-coach go-astern Britishers, who give up all their property to the first man that asks them for it, on the first breeze that threatens. I'm not that sort of man, I ain't, I guess; and if these boys try on me the game you mention, I'll rile them, I will. I'll bring 'em to. I've got a tool or two below that's jist the thing to do it with; and there, by Gosh, is my bowey-knife, kicking about the deck all the while; I should have been regularly lambasted if I had left that behind me." Snatching up the assassin-like blade, which had already once failed him in the hour of danger, the avaricious Ebenezer darted below to his cabin, without ever saying to the generous, though eccentric being who had given him his liberty, anything that might signify the least expression of either thanks or gratitude.

"Well," muttered old St. John, as he saw him depart, "Heaven only knows whether the storm will let you live long enough to change your note, for, if change you make, it will be to a bitter one; but that is your own fault. I can do no more; and, after all, creatures such as these are scarcely worth a thought, save that they are made in the image of our great Creator, who has given them all a claim of brotherhood upon us, infamously as they always return the slightest kindness by which those claims are allowed."

CHAPTER LXIII.

“Himself and much God knows how gotten cash,
He next embark’d, with risk of life and limb;
He said that Providence protected him.”

Beppo.

WHILE Mr. St. John had been carrying on with Ebenezer the discussion which ended in the latter obtaining his liberty, the mutineers had carefully lowered down their heavily-laden cutter of gold, which they had been obliged to sling in a peculiar manner; that is, trusting her entirely to a couple of pair of cask-slings, with the ordinary stretchers to prevent their springing their gunnels, as the usual apparatus that hooked in the bottom of the boat was of course inapplicable when she was loaded to the gunnels, and planked and nailed over with tarpaulin. In order to prevent the water getting in, nothing but the strong tow-ropes was allowed to protrude through the safety covering; and on the instant that she was seen to touch the water, the falls were cut away by men stationed with sharp knives, and borne on the crest of a mountain wave, for ever floated from the steamer, that prize of such dire contention—that base object of so much villany—the freight of gold.

Heavily laden as the cutter still was, Herbert’s plan was now seen to answer superbly. The heavy spray that constantly fell on her, rolled off again instantly; and while the weight was just sufficient to bring the boat well down to her bearings, yet it was still so compactly carried deep down in her bottom, as it were, and without any kind of top hamper, that little doubt was entertained of her being able to weather securely the present state of the sea, if no worse breeze should come on.

“Well, if that ’ere isn’t a dodge worth all kind of dodging,” exclaimed Boston Bill, as he rubbed his hands in delight and admiration; and turning round towards Herbert, he exclaimed: “Well, may I be grigged, if ever I do sail under a commander, your just the chap for me, captin, that’s a fact, I tell you.”

“Thank you,” said Herbert; “but first of all, I don’t think you ever will sail under a commander; and if ever you do sail under me, I don’t think the fact likely to conduce to your amusement. Now, I suppose, nothing remains but for you to get into your boat, and we’ll lower you down.”

"Thank you for nothing," said Boston Bill, putting his finger up most knowingly to his nose. "*You* lower us down!—you wouldn't be liking, I suppose, oh no, not at all—to contrive by accident to drown the whole boiling of us alongside, and then pick up your boat-load of gold that you've schemed to house over so cleverly, claim salvage for your dodge from the old chap, and then steam away in the real go-ahead kind of manner! Oh no, you wouldn't be likely to do anything of that sort, I'm sure. I say, captin, do you hear anything knock? Has Boston Bill managed to stumble on your plan of an accident? so vastly clever as you were with your sermon about praying, dying, and repentance? Was that your dodge, eh, captin? It wasn't so bad, was it—if I hadn't been down upon you?"

"No, indeed," said Herbert, smiling; "though I don't mean to say that if Providence decrees you to be all drowned alongside, that the ghost of any one of you would ever surprise me going into mourning for you. But I assure you I never took the trouble of forming any such plans as those which you have mentioned."

"Ah, probably not, captin; it's all as one for that. I feel intensely obliged to you. I'll stay late myself, till I see the boat lowered down, and then I'll slide down by the falls."

"You'll find that rather a dangerous style of getting into your boat with this heavy sea," said Herbert.

"Why, yes," replied the Bostonian; "it isn't very safe; but danger at sea is all a matter of comparison; and, to my mind at least, it will be quite as safe, and a deal more pleasant than troubling you and the worthy gentlemen here to lower us down, after you have already been so accommodating as to favour us with all your property. No, no, thank you; I have some conscience; I won't trouble you so far as all that, either."

"As you like," said Herbert; "we don't want to press too severely upon you. But who have we here?"

At this moment there bustled up the hatchway Ebenezer Wire. He was wrapped in three great-coats, carried under his left arm a blanket and a bird-cage, and in his right dragged along a huge portmanteau, the other end of which stood below the companion-ladder, labouring to drag it up.

The Bostonian turned as Herbert spoke, and, encountering this figure, burst into a hoarse laugh: "Halloa, Ebenezer, where are you going?"

"Going!" returned Ebenezer fiercely; "where should I be going, but to take care of my property?" spouting out the words with his usual excitement, and, if anything, still more exasperated by the puffing the pulling of his portmanteau had occasioned, wherein, in his eagerness, he had stuffed everything his cabin contained, valuable or not, and, from the extreme pressure of the time, accomplished this with a hastened difficulty that left him in utter bewilderment as to where he might have stowed away any

particular article that he was likely to want, to say nothing of having expended nearly all the breath in his body.

"Going with your property, are you," replied the Bostonian. "Why, who gave you leave to come with us?"

"Why, whose leave do you think I would ask? I have asked no one's leave, and no one shall prevent me from going."

"Oh, yes they will; I shall prevent you," replied Boston Bill. "You step into that boat at your peril, and your life's not worth three minutes' purchase."

"Nor yours—one," added a stern voice behind the Bostonian. The leader of the mutineers turned, and there was his old friend, Mr. St. John. Boston Bill looked a little aback as he recognized the formidable rifleman, through whose skill he had already suffered so deeply.

"I was merely recommending him for his own sake," said the mutineer. "I'm sure it's nothing to me if he chooses to run into danger; but, remember, I won't be responsible for his life if he chooses to intrude himself upon a roaring set of boys, who have a thorough contempt for anything at all like him."

"He's been already reminded of his danger," resumed Mr. St. John; "and if he will be fool enough to trust himself among you, I order you to receive him, or else, look to it. You may leave this ship's side; but the ball that is now in the breech of this rifle shall pass through your brain before you are fifty fathoms off."

Boston Bill scowled ferociously on the determined old gentleman as he heard this dictum; but then, something appearing to flash across his mind, just as if he had said to himself, "Have it as you will, this matter is just as short as it is long," he replied,—

"Well, sir, since you wish it, he shall go. I confess he would be a wiser man to stay behind; but that's his own look out."

"You hear what the leader of the mutineers has said; are you still resolved to go?" said Mr. St. John, once more making a vain effort for his safety.

"Nothing shall prevent me," fiercely answered Ebenezer, endeavouring to rush past the old gentleman with as much violence as if he had been his greatest enemy instead of his only friend.

"Stay," said Boston Bill; "don't be in such a violent hurry. Is this all your luggage?" smiling at the turn-out with the most undisguised raillery.

"Why, I calculate it's all that I want of any value," answered Ebenezer, never dreaming that the other was laughing at him.

"But wouldn't you like to take a little more if you could?" continued the Bostonian, who was very fond of a joke, provided it was not at his own expense.

"Why, no; I think that will do," said Ebenezer. "No, no, thank you; I won't trouble you with any more luggage than I have here," looking round at the heavy portmanteau.

"But if you're coming with us," said the other, "you've forgot the principal thing."

"No I haven't, I guess. What is it?" demanded Ebenezer.

"Why, man alive, where's your horse?"

"I tell you what, Mr. Boston Bill, if you think to rile me in this way, without making me kinder angry, you'll find yourself mistaken; and if you once make me reg'lar cantankerous, I guess you'll get a reg'lar lambasting, I reckon; and that you won't like no how, that's a fact."

"Well, I don't want any dispute with you, if you don't want your horse, say so. Here, give me the bird-cage to hand into the boat."

Ebenezer resigned the canary trap.

"By the way, Ebenezer," said the other, as soon as he had got it in his hand, "when I went away I left you fast a prisoner; do you think it was very honourable in any one to let you loose?"

"Why of course it was; how could any one do anything else? What rights have you to make people prisoners? Ain't we both free citizens of America, and isn't freedom the best blessing we all possess?"

"Well, if you think so, Ebenezer, just hold fast a minute, will you; there's another prisoner that ought to be set loose, before we start on our voyage," and holding up the canary cage, with the door open, Boston Bill, to the extreme horror of his fellow-traveller, gave the wiry prison a slight shake, and in an instant out flew the yellow little captive.

For a moment, the liberated bird fluttered round the quarter-deck, and then darting off to sea, it took its flight straight as an arrow, back to those regions of eternal spring, from which its evil-treated race were first borne prisoners.

It was only when the mutineer, in the enjoyment of his joke, rattled the empty cage before the face of Ebenezer, that the latter seemed to guess the extent of his misfortune.

"Eternal and particular perdition catch your accursed soul!" cried Ebenezer, stamping on the deck; "there now, if you haven't let loose my own dear wife, that was, her darling canary. If there was one thing on earth I valued next to my property, it was that 'ere bird, you eternal villain! O I shall go distracted, that's a fact; my dear Susanne! my dear Susanne! Well, to think of this!"

"You'd better look to your portmanteau, sir," said St. John, drawing his attention, by a touch on his arm, to the imminent jeopardy which now threatened that leathern convenience, in which Mr. Ebenezer Wire had hastily gathered all the valuables that were in his cabin, and which the steward had no sooner handed to the bowman in the cutter, than the bowman very unceremoniously handed it astern to the party next him, saying,—

"No child of mine."

The party next astern to the bowman, heavy as the portmanteau was, with still less ceremony bestowed on it jerk the second, he also exclaiming,—

“No child of mine,” and pitching it carelessly along to the next hand.

“No child of mine,” said the fourth, and away the portmanteau was bundled to the fifth; all the seamen laughing and roaring, and thinking this business of the portmanteau an uncommonly good joke, though all of them well knew at the time to whom the portmanteau really did belong, they having seen Ebenezer himself, in the act of dragging it up from the depths below, in the manner we have attempted to describe.

At this critical moment it was that the kindness of Mr. St. John drew Wire’s attention to the peril awaiting his property. As the rowers in the cutter were double-banked, or two on each thwart, the child in question, having now arrived at the fifth pair of hands, was close to the stern, where it ought to have been set down, and in full expectation that such would be its usage, Ebenezer cried out with considerable trepidation—

“It’s mine, my good men. It’s mine, set it down;” but the parties whom he addressed either did not, or would not hear this piece of information. They seemed, moreover, mightily pleased with the old familiar game they were playing, and crying with renewed energy,—

“No child of mine!”

“No child of mine!”

Not only drowned all the protestations of its lawful owner, but even the energetic tones of Mr. St. John calling them to order.

From one hand to another, the unfortunate portmanteau jumped about, until at last some stroke more powerful, or more malicious than the rest, gave it one final leap; away it bounded in the air, fell far, far beyond the gunnel of the boat, and descending swiftly overboard, was heard to give a short quick plunge, and sunk beneath the surface, to rise no more to mortal view.

Ebenezer rushed with an unearthly scream to the gangway, shouting, “Save it! save it!” He saw it strike the sparkling blue of the mighty mass rolling slowly astern; he marked the glittering foam close hurriedly o’er it—he watched the dark speck shoot swiftly and for ever into the deep world of tides below, and then throwing up his hands towards heaven, and clasping them wildly in the air, he sank down on both knees, yelling forth in the most heart-breaking tones of anguish,—

“My jewels! oh, my jewels! three thousand pounds worth of rough diamonds, as I’m a Christian man! Oh! I’m ruined! I’m ruined! I’m ruined!”

The pen shrinks from attempting the slightest description of the blasphemous execrations with which he called on every power that

men can reverence or fear, to blast the hopes, happiness, or substance of all who had either heart or part in the losses that had overtaken him.

That which had appeared to be earnestness in his manner before, now grew pale and insignificant beside his present agony; even the rude sailors, who had been tossing about his property with so much glee, now appeared unable to stifle some remorse for the anguish they had caused; not that they had the least regret for any actual pain they might inflict on any human being: but few of them had often, or ever before, seen sorrow or suffering in so palpable and distressing a shape.

All the quarter-deck passengers now gathered round the withered old man, offering, in the best way they were able, their feeble attempts at consolation; but, as is generally the result in all similar cases, such exclamations as—

“Never mind, my dear fellow,” from one.

“Well, it can’t be helped now,” from another.

“You should have kept a better look out,” from a third, and so on. These atrocious commonplaces, we say, seemed still further to goad to madness the unhappy Wire; who continued to tear to and fro the quarter-deck, from the spot where he had seen the portmanteau sink, up to the cabin skylight—gnashing his teeth, stamping his feet, clenching his fists, beating his head, and occasionally tearing out handfuls of his hair, like one possessed; pausing every few minutes to cry out,—

“Oh, why did I come on board this accursed ship? Why did I ever set eyes on any one of the fools and fiends aboard her?”

Debasing as this passion and the object of it was, every one seemed to feel the occasion that had caused his grief, except Boston Bill; who, with a grin upon his countenance that evidently argued how much he was pleased by the sight of others’ woes, replied to the sufferer’s last speech by saying,—

“It’s all your own fault, Ebenezer, and you have no one else to blame for it but yourself. This here is what always comes of lying—and bad principles. If you hadn’t told so many lies about your property, but, like a rael ’cute chap, given up the stumpy at first, and made the best of the least loss, this wouldn’t have happened to you: but don’t stand roaring and blubbering there, like a child; you’ll make me kinder vexed with you, if you don’t look sharp. Who cares for your anger? or who cares for your grief?—not us, I reckon. This is the most everlastingest pretty scene that ever I set eyes on. Ha! ha! ha!”

The moment the leader burst into a laugh, of course, all the minor satellites followed him, and as loud a shout was raised at the loss of the unfortunate Ebenezer as the walls of Old Drury ever heard at the best farce produced within them.

“Now then, are you all on board, my boys,” shouted Boston Bill looking to his crew.

"No, I'm not aboard yet, you eternal child of the bottomless pit!" suddenly cried Ebenezer, and moving towards the boat, as if this question brought all his dawning energies into light.

"What," said Mr. St. John, quietly stepping up to him, "are you so perfectly insane, after the way in which you see they have treated your property, as to risk your own life among them?"

"What's that to you? Off! take your hand off me," alluding to the gentle touch which Mr. St. John had laid on his arm to arrest his attention. "Out of my sight, I say, you accursed old man of the sea. You are the cause of all the ills and evils that have befallen me."

And as Mr. St. John, with a melancholy smile, drew on one side Ebenezer, the latter extended his left hand, clutched, and shaking it towards the boat. "Not go! not go! I must go! it's my only chance! My share of the seventy-six thousand pounds! It is the only chance I have to recover the fortune you have lost me! I will go, and stop me who dares!"

As he said this, he drew once more from its sheath in his bosom the bared knife we have seen him pick up, and with a fearful wildness, that bespoke the deadly despair within his mind, he in two bounds cleared the quarter-deck, and leaping directly into the stern-sheets of the cutter, took up his seat aft, glaring around him to see who would venture to oppose his forcible entry, or in other words, who should be the victim, that should glut the burning sense of anger and revenge that overwhelmed his reason.

But, whatever might be the intentions of the mutineers towards him for the future: however great the contempt he had hitherto inspired, they now perceived most clearly that the present was no time to upbraid his fury. Shrinking back on every side, and allowing him perfect room, the unfortunate being seemed satisfied with this degree of tolerance, and once more sheathing his dangerous weapon, hugged it to his breast, as if in a fresh paroxysm of despair, and bending down his head till it touched his knees, gave vent to a low, stifled shriek of agony, that reminded its hearers more of a lunatic asylum than ought beside.

CHAPTER LXIV.

“ ‘My third.’—‘Your third,’ quoth Juan; ‘what did she?’
She did not run away, too, did she, sir?’
‘No faith!’—‘What then!’—‘I ran away from her.’ ”

BYRON.

BOSTON BILL, having looked on in silence while Ebenezer sprang into the web that was spread for him, no sooner beheld the long man seated, than he called out,—

“Now, my boys, is Spoony Sam among you?”

“No; here I am. I’m coming,” said a voice behind.

The attention of the passengers thus arrested, they turned towards the speaker, and beheld a short stout man endeavouring, and not in the gentlest way, to disengage himself from the arms of a young woman.

“God of mercy!” cried she, holding round his neck, with an embrace that seemed to grow the stronger in proportion as the man endeavoured to free himself from it, “God of mercy, wilt thou permit him to leave us in this way? wilt thou allow the husband to cast off his wife, the father to forsake his children, all for the sake of *this* thrice-cursed money? Power of all goodness, and is there no other tie that can bind the heart, but one of gold!”

“Let me go, Moggy, let me go,” replied the sailor, struggling with renewed efforts to put off one arm, while the other still folded more closely around him. “How can you be so foolish! You know it’s all for your good. But that’s the way with the women. You never can persuade them in anything that’s for their benefit.”

“For their benefit, Samuel; and can you venture to say that word in the presence of these gentlemen?” turning round on them a pair of large, expressive eyes, and speaking in a tone that at once proclaimed her to come from old Ireland, even if the strong though untaught eloquence of her language had not already bespoke the fact; “how can anything be for the benefit of a varitious woman that takes from her side the husband that should protect and support her? How can anything be for the benefit of the children that robs them of the father, who alone can feed and teach them an honest way to get their livelihood? God be my witness, Samuel Mac Cormick, this is the cruellest

word that you've spoke this day; and oh, sweet Mary!" dropping a curtsy, and crossing herself, "is it my mother's only daughter, that has come these weary thousands of miles, to be deserted thus on the desolate ocean, without a friend to look to or a hope to stay."

"Cheer up, cheer up, Moggy, girl alive; it's only a parting for a time, I tell you. I'll be in the old country as soon as you, and with a share of all this money. Surely it's comfort and happiness we'll have all the rest of our lives long; only have a little courage, woman! Unhand me, then, girl; don't you see the captain's in a hurry?"

In an instant, down dropped the arm that had hitherto sought to detain this real and sad deserter, and brushing hastily with the back of her hand a tear that started from her eyes, and with a touching tenderness of tone that ought to have been heard to meet with anything like its appreciation, she said, as she mournfully shook her head,—

"And is this, then, the way you lave me and my young children—the three little blessed ones! Heaven be kind to them this wicked day; what have they done to offend you? and they hardly able to speak!"—lifting up a corner of her shawl, to dry her tears, and displaying a little infant nestling at the breast. "And how have I wronged you, that you should cast me off among strangers?—I, who have worked for you, would beg for you, do anything but steal for you! And oh, mere fool is me to have loved you, Mac Cormick, more than father, mother, house, or home. And this is all it comes to, to be deserted for a few pieces of dirty coin that, mark me, while I say it, will never better you, nor any one who have wrought so much misery to gain it."

"Wisht, wisht, Moggy, dry your eyes; I'll soon be back again with that that will make us happy for the rest of our days. Come, don't let us part in anger; give us a buss at starting."

And in a style half-bashful, half-ashamed of himself, and yet half-affectionate, the runagate attempted to take a kiss from the almost heart-broken woman he was so cruelly abandoning.

"No, Mac Cormick, never," said she, drawing back with an air of native offended dignity that seemed to give full two inches more to her stature; "I loved you, once dearly, because I was a woman; and Heaven has put that weakness in our hearts; but I were no woman on this sorrowful day, before God and man, to show one token of kindness to a father who can leave his poor helpless children on the wide, wide sea, to sink or swim!—to say nothing of his lawful, wedded wife."

Irritated at this rebuff, in which, by their looks, all the passengers who heard it seemed to join, Mac Cormick at once turned about and made for the boat.

"Go," continued his wife, gulping down the bitter hysterical sob, which almost choked her utterance, "get you gone, Mac Cormick, since go you will, you and your gold, and the ill companions that first made you sigh for that to which you had no title! Much good may the money do you. But may the curse of an offended God, and a broken-hearted mother be upon them and it, this heavy day!"

Turning rapidly towards the quarter-deck ladder, pressing her child to her bosom, as if to soothe its cries, and sobbing herself as if her heart really would break, the forsaken wife and parent hurried from the public gaze, to indulge her grief below, turning her back for ever upon him who had once sworn at the altar to love and to cherish her "till death do us part."

CHAPTER LXV.

"And in this way, with the sail lifting our frail bark over each mountain-wave, expecting almost every moment to go down, we pursued our course upon the ocean."

ADMIRAL BLIGH'S MUTINY OF THE "BOUNTY."

WHEN Mac Cormick had taken his seat, there occurred a fresh, and if possible, more degrading proof, how the love of Mammon can absorb and sever every other tie.

Boston Bill, who had been busy, seeing the falls of the cutter got clear, now turned round to Herbert,—

"Well, captin, as everything is now ready, I will call aft my men, and then we can deliver up the prisoner. I suppose there's nothing else you want, and if so, there's no objection, I suppose, to you giving us your honour that you won't attempt to fire on us after we've left the ship, as that old gentleman hinted, not long back."

"Certainly we will not fire," said Mr. St. John, stepping up, "provided we see that you do not ill-treat that unfortunate man who has lost his portmanteau."

"Oh, certainly not, of course, sir; so then, I'll call them aft. Forward, there!"—directing his voice to the fore-castle. "Hallo, there, Jack of the Cove, bring up your prisoner."

"Ay, ay," was the answer, heard in a mumbling voice, from beneath the fore cabin, and in a few minutes, the worthy who answered to the appellation of Jack of the Cove, appeared, leading aft the brigadier, his hands bound behind him, and attached to a stout deep sea lead-line. Just before they gained the quarter-deck, Boston Bill had the audacity to put out his hand to Herbert, saying,—

"Well, captin, I wish you a particular pleasant voyage, what remains of it!—I do! Now, as you have nothing to lose, no doubt you'll get on without any more interruptions; and, as I suppose it will be a long while before we meet again, I should like to part friendly with you, captin; so, perhaps you'll give us your flipper."

"And," said Herbert, putting both his hands in his pockets,— "and perhaps I'll leave it alone, Mr. Boston Bill; though I am free to admit, that should I ever be anxious to shake hands with

what you would term one of the most everlasting scoundrels in all creation, I will then seek out that little courtesy with you."

"Well, well, sir, it's no use our passing these little compliments. Every man to his calling. You are for preaching, and I'm for acting, so that's the difference. You were made for preaching, I see; and I only for acting, that's the odds between us; and, as you won't shake hands, there's the less love lost between us. Now, Jack of the Cove, give that gentleman up to his pals. Come you over here, and help me to lower this cutter down handsomely."

"If," said Herbert, "you do want to have a chance of your lives, and to show you that I don't want to endanger them, I advise you to give up your present plan. Hand the falls into the boat, and let three hands catch hold of each. You and your friend, Jack of the Cove, take your seats quietly, and then you can lower yourselves down with much more safety. Let one of your crew, with a sharp knife, stand by each fall, ready to cut away if they should get foul."

Boston Bill, on hearing this advice, took a moment's time to consider, and then, as if satisfied, replied,—

"Well, then, I believe this time you are right again, sir; and as you can have only one motive for your advice now, I give you what I don't suppose you will accept, that is, my thanks. I wish they were better worth an honest man's having. That's a matter for your own consideration."

And these were the last words that passed between the redoubted Boston Bill, and our party, on board that steamer, which, in an evil day for her destiny, had carried him to sea.

Jack of the Cove, as well as his commander, immediately stepped into their places. Herbert's advice was implicitly followed, as to the lowering of the boat by slow degrees. Three of her crew held on to each of the tackles, which were gradually allowed to reeve through the blocks, and as a huge sea arose beneath them, let go altogether.

"Cut away, of all," was now heard in the stentorian tones of the chief mutineer. A vigorous application of the knife followed this command, and in a few seconds afterwards, the cutter and her crew sank down into the trough of the sea, astern of the steamer, their oars out, steadily pulling, and the bark of gold, that *teterrima causa belli*, following in tow behind them.

All parties on deck now crowded to the stern, with mingled emotions, as may well be supposed, to watch what kind of weather the boat made of it. In a few minutes it was quite evident to all on board that, for so terrific a sea, the cutter was, as every one had foretold, overloaded. It was with some difficulty that they could keep her head to wind, and, even already, one of the parties had been set to baling; while a single glance sufficed to show that

this unfortunate being, to whom the drudging work was already allotted, was no other than the unfortunate Ebenezer.

This fact having been ascertained by a single glance from the unerring Broadbrim, Herbert looked round to see what Mr. St. John appeared to think of it; but the face of the latter was nowhere to be detected among the curious and excited gazers on the taffrail. Herbert, however, on looking back to the quarter-deck, perceived a solitary individual pacing slowly towards the bow. He descended a few steps of the quarter-deck ladder, midway on which, overcome with anguish and despair, flung at full length, lay the deserted wife and mother. Seating himself quietly by her side, the solitary man took her hand in his. The steamer, at this time, was head to wind; not a word was spoken aft, so perfect was the absorption of all interest by the departing mutineers. Herbert's quick ear, therefore, had little difficulty in catching what passed between the two individuals on whom his eye now rested.

"Look to Heaven for comfort, and you will find there," said the gentleman, "a truth and constancy of tenderness earth does not afford. Cherish, my good girl, those upright sentiments I heard you express to-day, and fear not, but that you and your orphans will always meet with a friend in your hour of need. For the present, take this, my good soul, and if any accident should separate us, you will find in it all the money you can require till you get among your friends; while, if we should gain the shore together, I will not forget what I have seen to day."

Pressing his pocket-book into the poor woman's hand, before she could utter a word of thanks, the comforter of the widow and the fatherless rose quickly, and in turning to regain the quarter-deck, Herbert perceived all his suspicions realized in the pale and melancholy features of Mr. St. John; unwilling to show the latter that he had been watched, our hero redirected his gaze towards the rapidly lessening form of the cutter. He saw that her crew had now hoisted their mast, and were endeavouring to show a small rag of sail to the breeze. When, at length, everything was ready for this dangerous effort, a small portion of canvas, about twice the size of a pocket handkerchief was displayed to the gale, and the helm of the boat gradually put up to run before it.

"Come, come, my dear father," said Nautila addressing him, "come and take a peep at them. We have fairly got rid of our tormentors at last! They have hoisted some sail, and are going to—*scud*—don't you call it, Mr. Herbert?"

"Yes," replied the latter, smiling at the proficiency of his pupil, who once more looking towards her parent repeated her invitation, adding, "Do step here quickly, papa, or they will be out of sight before you can fairly see them."

"No, my dear Nautila," said the old man pausing for a few

moments near her, "no person can ever see any good come of them; and for my part, therefore, I trust my old eyes may never again rest on such a complication of wickedness and folly."

And, quietly resuming his walk once more towards the bow, the old gentleman seemed determined not to let his eyes rest again on anything so unworthy their contemplation.

By the younger spirits of the party the attainment of this stoicism was, however, impossible, those two dark specks and that little glimmering rag of white that seemed every moment about to burst from the bonds that confined it, exercised a sort of magic over their minds from which they sought not to escape.

Even yet they scarcely could believe that those small and fast diminishing dots contained all the turbulent, relentless, avaricious spirits that had destroyed their peace and threatened destruction to every one on board; and, indeed, had done everything but effect all they threatened. Even yet they could scarcely allow themselves to rejoice over the truth of their deliverance from all they so lately feared. Even yet they could hardly realize the dream, that in so small a compass lay that talismanic source of evil—that coveted bribe for all iniquity—that ample fortune which so lately had called owner, the eccentric being pacing the deck with such coolness behind them, and had constituted a great heiress the lovely and light-hearted creature who watched its departure without a sigh, and smiled with a grateful heart to think that her friends were thus cheaply rid of the danger that lately threatened them.

"By the gods of war! she'll be upset yet!" nervously exclaimed Herbert; as he watched each boat now plunging down amid a dash of foam behind it, that threatened the imminent danger of pooping her, as the little bark shot into the trough of the sea, and was for some seconds hid from sight, and then at last once more, appearing further and further off, until the patch of white seemed almost like a sea-bird, skimming the surface of the wave, so faint and dim it grew.

Again and again, from the increasing delay in the reappearance of the sail, the belief arose in each spectator's heart, that the overladen cutters had foundered in the hollow of the seas; and again the diminishing spot of light, ascending on the further side, appeared to contradict the supposition.

By this time, any trace of the hull of either boat was lost, and at length, as the sail of the rebels, was seen slowly mounting up towards the crest of a great wave more mountainous than the rest, the sea appeared to break distinctly over her. All trace of the canvas vanished in an instant, something like a confused mass of oars, and mast, and boat, keel uppermost, showed its dark contrast for a second, against the grey and lowering heavens beyond, as the sea temporarily lifted it above the highest line of the horizon, and then was lost to sight!

"Heaven forgive them! I fear they are gone at last," cried Herbert, to whom this final appearance seemed conclusive.

"Where are they, friend Herbert?" demanded Broadbrim, who could no longer trace their progress.

"God have mercy on their souls," replied Herbert, "if my fears are right, every one of them is lost. I thought I saw the boat swamped by a curling sea, as she topped the wave. If that were so, then, in this heavy weather, ten to one if any of them reach the smaller cutter, even if she lives; and if they do, it will only be to prolong a miserable existence, without food or shelter. Such then is the issue, of what the old poet so aptly called '*auri sacra flammæ*.'"

"It is a dreadful fate, friend, if thou art right in thy conjecture."

"Well, I may be wrong, certainly; but I fancy I am too old a hand at sea, to make much mistake in such a matter. But we will watch for the next quarter of an hour, and see if the least thing like their sail can be detected."

"We will, friend."

Long and anxiously did the fifteen minutes seem to creep away, as the excited eyes of all present strained their utmost to pierce the combining ridges of wave and cloud, that were so widely tossed together in the distant horizon. Broadbrim was the first to speak, looking down to a large repeater he had held in his hand during the given interval.

"The time is up, friend Herbert," said he, "and I fear me, they are gone unprepared to their last account; may Heaven forgive us all our sins, and teach us to forbear, especially from judging each other! But of a verity, these last twelve hours have borne a dread report to heaven."

Herbert, also, could not help feeling a deep commiseration for so many human beings, hurried at once into eternity at such a moment, notwithstanding all their guilt against himself and friends; and rushing to his duty, as a resource from sad reflection, he hurried to Mr. St. John, who was still pacing the quarter-deck, in the same quiet and thoughtful mood, as if the steamer had but half an hour before started from the safety of New York.

"They are every one of them, I fear, lost," said our hero, addressing the old gentleman.

But no answer was returned.

"I say, sir, I think they are every one of them lost. I fancy, I saw a sea break into the boat and swamp them; if so, she's gone down about three miles astern of us."

"Did they indeed survive long enough to get so far?" gently answered the other. "Ill-fated men! Then, Captain Herbert, all that you can do is to order the engines to resume their former speed; and may Heaven hear our prayers for a more prosperous passage than we have hitherto experienced."

"But surely, Mr. St. John, as the boat with the mutineers is swamped, and the gold in all probability still floating, would it not be worth our while to run back and pick up our freight? We might accomplish it all in half an hour, and with little or no risk. Surely, such a sum of money is worth the experiment."

"No, sir," sternly interrupted Mr. St. John; "if putting out my finger could restore that money to me, I would not do it; it should go to the bottom of the sea first, every farthing of it. There is a curse about the possession of wealth of which I entertain a perfect horror. Have you not seen enough this day in the very calamity you narrate to me, and in all the deaths, and sorrows, and sufferings we have gone through, in all the outrages that ominous treasure has prompted, not clearly to perceive, how little of real blessing attends its possession. No, no, not a yard will we move from our course for it,—let it go; and God, in his mercy, grant it may be the senseless scapegoat that bears into the wilderness of the ocean the offences of all on board, that we may at last find some prosperity on our voyage. Breathe not a word of a return, but order on the engines; fly from the fatal temptation, before another thought on the subject can be entertained in any other minds except our own."

With an involuntary elevation of his brows, at what Herbert could not help holding to be a weakness of the old man, he at once complied, and moving forward gave the command.

"Engine-room, below there, move ahead."

The shrill pipe of the boy echoed the command down the hatchway in an instant; the steam that had been before wasting in the air was shut off, and confined to the boiler; a sudden plunge was heard on each side of the vessel. The sparkling deep turned up its brightest foam in many a bubbling eddy, and with a greater increased velocity sprang onward on her voyage the vast Atlantic steamer.

CHAPTER LXVI.

“Lay on, Macduff,
And damn'd be he that first cries, hold, enough!”

Macbeth.

GREATLY as the weather had improved, it was still stormy and threatening; not a promise appeared anywhere in the sky holding forth to the tempest-tost mariners the least hope of being able to get an observation of the sun, so as to determine what their position really was. All, therefore, that could be done, was to shape the best course by the chart that Herbert could devise, guess at the position of the ship as well as might be, and leave the rest to Providence.

The dangers that threatened our friends were indeed dreadful. The engine had been already severely sprained, two suits of sails had been blown away; the ship even now became somewhat leaky, and the point on which she might be in the vast ocean so uncertain, that for all they knew, each stroke of the paddle-wheel might be bearing them to destruction; still, after the horrors of the preceding night, the very possession of peace brought joy, and every one felt as if it were a luxury to be able to get his head above the companion cabin, without having two or three ambushed rifles to pop at it.

As they had now resolved to push ahead, Herbert's first duty was to bury the unfortunate dead, who, having fallen in the struggle of the night, had, amid the excitement of getting rid of the mutineers, hitherto been left almost where they fell, being simply drawn together in a melancholy heap with an ensign thrown over them.

Seeking out the kind-hearted, though peppery, Welsh clergyman, whose good humour had returned to him on hearing that the mutineers had foundered, he at once consented to put on his canonicals and read the service of the church over the remains of the unhappy sufferers.

A few hammocks were now procured, for some of them belonged to the very dead who had so suddenly entered on their last sleep; and sewn in these, with small quantities of ballast attached to sink them, they were laid on a grating and placed on the gangway.

The deck was next carefully cleansed from all traces of the sanguinary struggle that had taken place upon it, and the bell

having been tolled, a message was sent into the saloon to announce to such of the passengers as chose to attend, that the funeral service was about to be performed.

A burial at sea is always a solemn and affecting ceremony. The lonely position of the survivors, and the grand and moving spectacle of the mighty ocean, which may at any time prove the common grave of all around; the steady and mournful wailing of the winds, the transparent darkness of the living tomb below—these accompanying circumstances produce upon the minds a solemn effect that may be sought in vain ashore.

Snatched as they all felt themselves to have been from a violent death, which had so lately and so long impended over them, in more forms than one, nearly all the passengers came on deck to witness the spectacle—and a touching one it was.

The bodies lay at the gangway, close by the bulwarks, which the fury of the gale had left in ruins. In the middle was the worthy clergyman, whose arm was in a sling, from the entrance of a buck-shot. On one side of the grating, ready to render his assistance, was Herbert, with his side bandaged from a severe wound over the ribs, and opposite to him the gallant brigadier, with a fresh and formidable scar plainly visible upon his cheek.

Behind them, with his bald shining pate uncovered to the gale, came our esteemed friend, Broadbrim, who had, perhaps, enjoyed the most narrow escape of any there; having, indeed, descended into the grave, and yet returned alive.

When the service approached that point where the dead are committed to their final resting-place, Herbert and the brigadier gently lifted the grating, when slowly glided from it those cold and inanimate forms, whose battles were now over, and for whose reappearance among the glittering circles of life and gaiety, many a fond, and many a bright eye might watch in future, but, alas, must watch in vain!

This painful duty over, the assembled groups dispersed, most of them to talk of the probable moment of their arrival in port, the only formidable obstacle to which they now appeared to think removed. While Herbert arranged with the brigadier and the clergyman, whom he appeared to consider the two most able lieutenants he could find, the various watches for performing the duties of the vessel, and having settled this matter so that each of them should have eight hours below for four hours on deck, he himself repaired to the captain's cabin, to endeavour, by fresh calculations, to determine whereabouts on the chart they really were.

With the very scanty information afforded to him, our hero worked the question four times; and as each calculation came pretty much to the same point, he at last concluded that it must be very nearly right, and marked out the course for the next twenty-four hours accordingly.

This he communicated to his two lieutenants; and as all of them had been fagged much alike through the night, he looked round for some one who had enjoyed the benefit of regular rest, to take charge of the deck, while he and his friends, who truly needed some repose, went below to prepare themselves, by a little sleep, for the coming active day.

He now, however, found that every one in whose abilities he could place any reliance had been equally exposed during the past hours with himself and friends. In this dilemma, however, the debate was overheard, and the difficulty obviated, by a volunteer, in whom all placed the highest confidence.

"Leave the directions of your watch with me," said Nautila, stepping up to the debating and wearied combatants. "I am a capital sailor, you know, Mr. Herbert; and if my father sees no objection, I will take charge of the deck, and see that the course is steered, with pleasure. Although I did hear you fire once or twice, I must confess I thought our safety to be in such good hands, I could not help sleeping. What say you, my dear father—will you let me 'do the state some service?'"

"I see no objection in the world," replied old St. John, patting his darling fondly on the cheek; "I know no one on board who can beat you, either at boxing a compass, or sailing it. And I take it as a practical testimony of the soundness of my system of education, that in a moment of peril like this, you are not only able to take care of yourself, but to assist others. You, therefore, shall be our third lieutenant."

With many a joke at Nautila's new office, and one or two sneers from distant parts of the saloon, which, it is unnecessary to add, came from ladies wholly unable to compete with her in good looks, and in which fact the chief charge against her lay, though hidden under the pretext of her being a bold, forward minx, our heroine, who knew too little of the world to suppose that kindness and utility could be met by gratuitous ill-nature, and too wholly ignorant of her own exquisite beauty to imagine it capable of setting others against her, laughed heartily at the merriment occasioned by her new employment, noted down, with attention, on her tablets, the instructions she received for her guidance, promised to pay implicit attention in following them up, and finally gave Herbert a look that amply repaid him for all he had suffered, and sent the brigadier to his couch, uttering loud groans of lamentation.

On being asked by Herbert what calamity it was that he was particularly deploring, he made answer,—

"Oh, by this and by that, is it not enough to make a man scowld his own father?"

"What for?" said Herbert.

"Can you ask that question? For nothing less than this—that when Nature took it into her head to make one such a girl as that

above deck, for your delight and happiness, mightn't she just as well have made the fellow-one for mine."

"Oh," replied our hero, laughing, "search the world diligently, and you'll find the *one* to match, if not more. Nature is too great a master not to produce her *capi d'opera* in duplicate, at least."

"Well, well," rejoined Symonds; "the little candlestick-maker aft there is not so bad after all. But when I see her stand beside Nautila, I think to myself, as these Scotch bodies say, 'it's a far cry to Lochow;' and so, to say the least of it, your darling jewel is a long way off from Brummagem."

And in a few minutes, both the tired talkers were fast locked in sleep.

CHAPTER LXVII.

"Foiled by a woman's hand before a baffled wall ;—
Oh had you seen her in her gentler hour."

Childe Harold.

THE day rolled slowly and darkly on, and still Nautila, untired, retained her charge of the deck. Several of the clocks on board proclaimed the hour to be rapidly approaching four, and several of the passengers thinking that in such a long interval of time the fair girl must necessarily be exhausted, requested from her permission to rouse the sleepers, but this she would not permit.

Knowing how severe had been the demands made upon their exertions, and that the security of all would be best protected by affording to those on whom the chief reliance of the ship was placed, the amplest opportunity for recruiting their strength, she continued, without shrinking, to maintain her post.

At length, however, when day began to pale, it occurred to her that Herbert might be uneasy if allowed to sleep longer, and she at last reluctantly sent to summon him to the deck.

Speedily answering her call, he found that all his directions had been implicitly obeyed, and that, as far as human prudence could avail, everything was going on well.

Taking on himself once more the charge of the ship, our hero allowed the others to sleep on without interruption ; for none but those who have discharged the duties of an officer of the watch on board a man-of-war know what the real luxury of sleep is.

About ten o'clock, as if they had all previously agreed upon a signal, one by one of the slumberers returned to the consciousness of life ! Old St. John the first, then Broadbrim, then the brigadier, and finally Wynn Powell. All of them were shocked at their own indulgence, though grateful to the kindness that had procured it ; and learning that Herbert was at his post, they unanimously declared that mortal men were never so hungry in this world before, and quickly ordering the steward before them, at once proceeded to put that worthy functionary through a severe cross-examination as to what could be then and there had and enjoyed for a meal, that was to comprise breakfast, luncheon, dinner, tea and supper, in one. This important affair being satisfactorily settled, never were mortal beings apparently more light and happy upon any premises,

than were our friends on that position of danger on which they all stood, though none seemed particularly sensible of its existence.

"I tell you what," said the brigadier, as, with the carelessness of a light-hearted man, he threw on the articles of his toilet one after another, "I conceive that at this moment we're a devil of a sight nearer Ould England than any of us expect. For, even already, I can tell the difference of the climate to the extent of an additional flannel under-waistcoat—at the least; it's grown so cold. What does the steward say? that he can give us rumpsteak and oyster-sauce? Well, if I shall not do justice to it, I'm mistaken. A very respectable man, that steward; and though I don't know what he may hail for aboard here, yet it strikes me mighty forcibly his name ought to be Doolagin; for if his mother wasn't a man that served in our regiment, I'm mightily mistaken."

"Then, brigadier, we all think you are," roared his companions.

"You vagabonds! what are you laughing at?" returned the brigadier; "have I been making a bull again? Ha! well, I suppose it's the beefsteak that was running in my head. But, by my honour, gentlemen, the mother of the steward was a woman greatly respected in the regiment, seeing that she sold a glass of the best spirits that ever rejoiced mortal man on a damp morning. Ah! a very accommodating woman she was, the mother of the steward."

"Friend, thou meanest the steward's mother, doubtless. But thy head, as thou sayest, runneth too much on the flesh-pots of Egypt to be over clear in thy discourse; so come along."

"By the Lord of Innisfail, Broadbrim, I believe you are right this time, and small blame to you. So allow me to hand you into the saloon, sir. Broadbrim, your a jolly good partisan for a small fight in a quiet way, always in a quiet way, Broadbrim, and then I wouldn't wish to have a better, my man of peace."

By this time it appeared that though the mutineers had, as was anticipated, seduced some of the crew from their allegiance, others, who remained firm, had preferred being put under restraint to joining in an enterprise which was as full of danger as of crime. These, on being released by the rebels, came on deck and tendered their services.

Dividing into three watches the seamen who, though small in number, were well inclined to do their duty to the utmost, Herbert first selected those who appeared to be the best, and appointed one as quartermaster to each of the three officers who were to keep watch. He then similarly distributed the other seamen; putting with the brigadier and Wynn Powell those who had the most experience in nautical matters, and reserving for his own watch those who appeared to require the most supervision. This

done, he gave the ship's intended course to one of the best of the lot, placed him at the helm, and then went down below to take some food for himself.

Nautila, who had also in her services undergone considerable starvation, was called to the head of the supper-table. And, from looking at the merry crew who ranged around, little would it have been imagined that danger lurked so near.

Songs and merriment from several of the party succeeded this, the first enjoyable meal that had been served on board the *Atlantic*, since the ill-omened evening of her departure; and Herbert, who agreed at twelve o'clock to give his watch up to the brigadier, was among the gayest of the party; retiring from it, however, soon after eleven, and advising his friends to do the same.

To give advice is one thing, to follow it is another. The brigadier imagining it was idle, after so long a sleep to attempt to gain any more, never thought of trying the experiment, but giving a free vent to those uproarious spirits he always possessed, allowed the morrow to think for itself, and proceeded to sing his best songs, and drink with his best energies the best punch that his friends chose to brew for him, until, twelve o'clock striking, he was reminded that the time had arrived to go on deck, and commence his watch.

This was a signal for a general break up. Away went the major to the quarter-deck, and all the other passengers at once retired to their cabins. Herbert, who was listening from his cot, could distinguish that the gallant brigadier was a little fresh; but, thinking that no danger was at hand, and knowing that at any rate the night air, which seemed every moment to grow colder, must infallibly soon sober him, he contented himself with giving the best instructions in his power to his friend, writing the course to be steered, in pencil, on a card, and then addressing himself to his repose.

For some time the brigadier stumped it bravely. If he had been on outpost duty in the face of the enemy, with all the delicacy of a soldier's reputation to guard, and all the horrors of a court-martial to face, he could not have been more vigilant.

After an hour, however, the cold—the previous night's exertions—the warm potations in which he had indulged—and, more than all, we must do the brigadier the justice to admit—the very little demand that there appeared to exist for his services, all contributed to bring on a sense of drowsiness, under which our friend more than once found himself walking now against the combings of the saloon-skylight, now against the edges of the ship's bulwark, and presently bounce against the man at the helm.

"D—n the sea, it runs exceedingly high, doesn't it, my man?" said the brigadier.

"Werry, sir," replied the seaman, who was himself nodding

rapidly towards the land of dreams. "But I must say I don't signify the sea so much, holding on here by the helm, as I do this infernal cold! I can't think, sir, what makes the weather so cold suddenly."

"Oh, d—n the cold!" said the brigadier, "I don't care a fig about that; but I confess I don't like being kicked and cuffed about by this infernal sea, running in this manner; its d—d impertinence," muttered the brigadier, "to a field officer of my standing!—and curse me if I put up with it. I'll parade him—I'll parade him, by the Lord of Innisfail! Call him out, there's nothing like it!" and appearing to have a very confused notion of who the culprit was, that had so much offended him, the brigadier nodded his head, kept on muttering something to himself, and at last, in order to reflect how he might best punish his tormentors, sat down on one of the benches of the quarter-deck.

A vague and indistinct notion crossed his mind, that it was possible he might go to sleep in such a position; but straightway muttering to himself,—

"No, it's only for a minute;—it's only for one minute." With this dangerous self-delusion, he allowed himself to be entirely surprised by the poppy-headed god, and leaning his back against the shrouds, soon snored aloud.

Whether it was the sound, or simply the example, that proved contagious, we don't undertake to ascertain; but in a few minutes after this lapse of duty in the major, there were few men in the whole ship who slept more soundly than the worthy individual who at that moment happened to be steering her, as acting quartermaster; and in this state of things, the powerful engine in her hold—the mighty monster who neither waked nor slept, nor laughed, nor wept, with any one—rolled the stupendous vessel on, down the vast crest of one huge wave, and panting up the steep ascent of another, careless and heedless of all around it

CHAPTER LXVIII.

“ Then rose from sea to sky the wild farewell,
Then shriek'd the timid, and stood still the brave ;
While some leap'd overboard with maddening cry ! ”

BYRON.

How long matters had continued in this state is not known ; but somewhere towards half-past three o'clock in the morning, which is within half an hour of the end of the middle watch, Herbert was awoke from a sound sleep by the most terrific crash it is possible to conceive.

He was sleeping on his right side, and was dashed with fearful violence completely up against the deck above him ; then down again, then from side to side, and then thrown out headforemost against the door of his berth.

Having been, before this period, run ashore during his service, the first impression of our hero was, that the steamer had struck on some sunken rock ; but then, from the position which he supposed her to occupy, on the high seas, how could this be ? Of this, however, he felt certain, that some peril, more imminent, more deadly than all which they had gone through—was now at hand ; and rushing upon deck, just in the state in which he was thrown from his bed, how did his heart sink with horror at the grand, but terrific scene which awaited him ! The wind appeared to have changed entirely, and instead of the strong remnant of the gale, which he left expending its violence upon the ocean, a moderate breeze, deadly cold, but gentle in its power, filled the double-reefed topsails, which he had caused to be set, shortly before he had resigned the deck to the brigadier.

Instead of the clouded horizon that he had last beheld, he now gazed on the most clear and undimmed firmament, of dark and purpled blue, jewelled with its countless myriads of stars, and the moon shining in its full splendour down upon the deck :—but where were they ?—What had become of them ?—what was the awful and thrilling, yet magnificent sight, that met his bewildered gaze, close aboard the starboard gangway, throwing a strong and broad shadow across the steamer, right amidships, seeming to lift to heaven a head so towering and lofty that the eye failed to trace its point, and catching upon innumerable pinnacles, bright and sparkling as the diamond from which it

seemed to have been hewn, the endless varied colours of blue in all its shades, and green and even violet? what, indeed, but a vast iceberg, that rolled, and heaved, and rocked fearfully to and fro, with the still heavy sea around it, and which throwing out a little peninsula of ice, from the vast main body of the berg, held the steamer wedged on the sharp spear-like points of this, to all appearance immovable as a rock. It is true, every now and then a sharp cutting, crashing sound, would be heard, as the heavy seas swelled and roaring passed the steamer by.

In an instant Herbert knew that fatal injury had already been done to the bottom of the ship. So sudden had been the concussion, that the latter, lying on the larboard side, still kept plying away with the left paddle wholly plunged in the water, while that on the right hand whirled and whizzed round and round in idle air.

"Heaven have mercy upon us! we are all lost now!" muttered our hero, as the full sense of the impending danger rushed upon his mind. "At least, I shall, in my death, have the satisfaction of falling near Nautila; and it's as well to die calmly, as with the trepidation of a coward. ORDER, men! ORDER!" cried he, seeing that the seamen, as they rushed on deck, gave way to the most senseless bewailings. "To your stations, every man of you. What are you afraid of?—It's only an iceberg. Below there, in the engine-room—back the paddles.—Aft there, on the quarter-deck—right the helm. Now, my boys, some of you square the yards—keep your hearts up like men, and brave ones—and don't behave like a brood of chickens in a farmyard."

Thus endeavouring to inspire into the breasts of others a hope, that he could by no means entertain in his own, Herbert repaired to his berth, hastily put on the rough sea clothes that he had provided to guard against the increasing cold, and cramming into his pocket two or three articles which he thought he should want, he ran back, with all the rapidity in his power, hastened on deck, and without explaining his intentions to any one, rapidly and, as he thought, unobserved, began to sound the pump-well.

As Herbert did this, however, he looked up and saw standing beside him, neighbour Broadbrim and Wynn Powell. They, like himself, knew full well, that the entire fate of the steamer depended upon the report that this mute instrument should in the next moment make of the hold below.

It may easily then be imagined with what anxiety their eager eyes fixed on Herbert, as he first examined the sounding line, to see that it was quite dry, and thus in a state to show accurately into what quantity of water it might be plunged, and next swiftly, but silently rubbed the iron attached to it, beneath his arm, to withdraw from that every possible quantity of moisture.

On the next moment down went this divining-rod, on the report of which so much of their future comfort or misery was to depend.

For no great pause did their fate hang in suspense; hand over hand Herbert drew up the sounding-line, and something not unlike a groan burst even from his stout heart when he beheld the result of his inquiry.

"What is it—what is it, friend?" demanded Broadbrim.

"What is it?" eagerly asked Wynn Powell, on the other side.

"Five feet of water in the hold!" replied Herbert, in perfect despair of now saving the steamer, and pausing to consider within himself whether there was the slightest chance left for those who might remain on board.

"What was there when thou soundedst last?" asked the quaker.

"Only nineteen inches, three hours since," replied our hero; "this has all been done at the last shock."

"Oh, my dear Julia!" moaned the Welsh clergyman, in a tone which he thought was inaudible.

"But, friend Herbert, hast thou not made some mistake? or, perhaps the position of the ship may influence the question, for she leaneth over, I perceive, very exceedingly."

"No, Broadbrim, that could make but a very slight difference; an inch or so; and, indeed, as there's five feet water here amidship, from the position in which the ship's head is lifted up, the cabins must almost be afloat astern."

"What shall we do?" demanded Broadbrim.

Herbert paused for an instant to debate. It was a fearful responsibility thrown upon him. Each alternative of the only two now open to those on board, was desperate; and should he advise them wrongly, many, many lives might pay the penalty.

"No," at length said he, "there is no help for it! With a ship so frightfully wounded as this, and no crew to work her, to attempt to brave the sea would be madness. Desperate as it is," continued he, turning to the others, "we have nothing for it but to get upon the ice, with all the speed we can. Run quickly to your berths, and huddle on all the warm clothes in your possession. It is all that is left us. I myself will go and get Nautila and Mr. St. John out of the ship as rapidly as possible." Turning round towards the seamen, he said,—

"My men, the only hope you have of safety, either on the ice or on the sea, is in being calm. Each of you had better adopt which alternative he thinks most prudent. I myself conceive the safest place is the ice. If any of you agree with me, and determine to trust to it, take my advice on two points. Clothe yourselves as warmly as you can, and let each man ensure for himself all the provision he can procure. Don't be in a hurry, for there will be no danger for some time yet!—all our safety, I once more beg you to bear in mind, depends on being cool! Engine-room, below there—stop the paddles!"

But no one appeared to pay the slightest attention to this call, and in the hurry and emergency of the moment something must either have happened to the engineer, or he must have quitted his post to provide for his own safety, in getting to the ice; at any rate, all was for the present deserted in the engine-room, and, although Herbert gave the command again and again, he could get neither answers to his summons nor obedience to his commands.

On roared, and jumped, and hissed the engine; on tore the foam-creating paddle-wheels, one revolving idly in the air, the other labouring and groaning beneath its undue weight of water. The vast demon of steel and fire within, appearing, at every revolution, to grow more maddened in its wild career, more determined that each successive stroke should exceed in swiftness that which preceded it; merry or fierce in its speed, as the spectator might hold it to be, and utterly indifferent whether its velocity bore those it carried to a ball or a funeral, conducted them to those warm firesides where the kindest welcome awaited their expected arrival, or conveyed them to those dark and gloomy caves of death where the wild ocean already roared over countless skeletons.

"How provoking this is," muttered Herbert, "to be detained at such a moment; and yet, as the paddles have been reversed, and are backing her fast astern, if she should suddenly glide off into deep water, the probability is, that she will founder with every soul on board."

Again, and again he roared—"Engineer, below there!" but none appeared. "I wonder," said he, "if my own recollection of what I saw the day I came on board is sufficient to enable me to stop her. It appeared a very simple operation. There was a small handle, I remember, they turned somewhere; at any rate, we cannot be worse off. I think I will go down and try."

Accordingly, down the iron ladder Herbert immediately descended, muttering to himself, as he passed over the well-remembered and brightly-polished iron bars,—

"Little did I think, on that first day, ever to have gone down this hatchway for such a purpose as the present; little did I suspect that it led me in reality to the gates of death. But I would enter it again under similar circumstances, if it gave me the privilege of dying near her!"

Mournful as these cogitations were, they did not prevent Herbert from doing his duty manfully. He found, as he had expected, the engine-room entirely deserted, and nothing but the light from the furnace to guide his operations. Assisted by this, he speedily found the handle in question, and boldly applying his strength, as he had seen the engineers do, before him, the vast complication of machinery at once came to a dead stop.

"Thank God for that!" exclaimed our hero; and now, I sup-

suppose, I must let off the steam, or else we shall be blown up next. Let me see, where was the valve? Oh, this, I think is the handle for that," and giving himself, in his turn, to this new task, he moved the iron.

With a report almost like a pistol, he heard, to his great relief, the sudden rush of the confined vapour commence its roaring noise on the deck above.

"Well," said Herbert, "whoever that writer was who taught mankind that no knowledge can be thrown away, but every species of intelligence finds its proper use, I reverence him. And now, let me find my way to the saloon."

It may easily be supposed that our hero lost little time in guiding his steps in the direction in which lay all his thoughts, hopes, and happiness. Almost the first person he encountered on gaining the bottom of the stairs was Nautila, extending her fair hand towards him. He seized it with eagerness and delight.

"Is this true, Herbert," she demanded, "that you think we had better quit the ship?"

Drawing her gently to his side, and taking an opportunity of the shadow that concealed them, Herbert could not forbear taking what might prove the last kiss he should ever steal from those rosy lips.

Greatly comforted by which operation, he answered,—“The fate of all of us, dearest, hangs on the merest thread, and even those who shall survive, can only purchase life at the price of great suffering.”

“God’s will be done,” muttered Nautila in reply; “so that we are not separated, every other ill I can endure with resignation.”

“Then, Nautila, nothing shall separate us,” replied Herbert, once more folding her in his arms, “no, not even death itself. Hasten back to your cabin; I will remain here till your return. Quick for your life, love! Put on all the warmest articles of clothing you can find—persuade your father to do the same; and if you have a box or two of eau-de-cologne, or wine, or brandy, or spirit of any kind, bring all you can. If you miss me when you return, wait here till I come back; I am simply going into that cabin opposite, to find a carpet-bag; and even if you feel the ship foundering, rest in this spot till you find me here. We will die together, at least, if no kinder fate be allotted to us.”

With hearts lightened of all their load, the lovers parted for a few minutes to execute the various commissions which we have named. In the mean time, what was the general condition of the steamer? Few scenes can be imagined more terrible.

All those parties who, but the night before, had quitted each other in the full hope of proving the rest of their voyage peaceful and prosperous, now found themselves suddenly summoned from the fancied security of their slumbers, to gaze, face to face,

on death in one of the most appalling shapes the grisly phantom can assume.

Scarcely knowing what was the danger that threatened them, or, far less, how to avoid it, the generality of the passengers all rushed from their cots, male and female, very nearly in the same state as to apparel as that in which the danger had surprised them.

Had the real share which the unfortunate brigadier owned in this calamity been exactly ascertained, it is difficult to say what might have become of him. But, poor fellow, we must do him the justice to admit, that no punishment, of whatever depth or severity, could have equalled the real agony he endured on seeing the distressing climax of misfortunes that he had brought on all his friends.

"Oh!" said he, stamping on the deck, and muttering the words to himself for fear they should be heard, "If I am not the most unfortunate of all unfortunate devils under the sky—no matter! As if fifty thousand gentlemen, before now, haven't taken a quiet nap on a night watch, and no one been a pin the worse for it. But for me, by the Lord of Innisfail, I only just closed my eyes for a few seconds, and may I never taste whiskey again in this mortal world if, on that very instant, the whole face of nature isn't up in arms against me. The wind changes; the moon rises; and old father frost himself, by the lord Harry, builds a perfect palace of icicles under my nose, for me to break my shins against. Oh, then, indeed! indeed! if we haven't made a pretty mess of it, at last. It's no matter. This is worse than all the pirates in Virginia," looking up at the threatening, but certainly exquisite spectacle presented by the iceberg.

At this moment something brushed by his elbow, and, on turning round, he saw the good-natured face of Broadbrim, though looking rather serious.

"Hallo, father, where the devil are you off too in such a hurry this morning?" cried the brigadier, who seemed to forget that most people feel differently at different times.

"Friend, friend, do not blaspheme at this awful moment," replied the quaker; then lowering his lips, till they were close to the brigadier's ear, he added, "Friend Herbert has just found five feet of water in the ship's hold; there is little safety for any of us but on the iceberg. Ah, friend Symonds, if thou hadst been keeping thy watch properly, could this have happened? But I will not add to thy grief by my reproaches; do what thou canst to repair the evil, by saving as many of these poor women creatures as possible; that is all that is left to us."

As Broadbrim said this, he hastily rushed down into the saloon, while the brigadier dashing his hand to his forehead, exclaimed,—

"If ever there was a man tempted to drown himself right off hand, doesn't he stand here, at this moment? But to talk of

drowning, it's no use either; we shall each of us get our turn in that way shortened, before long. Save the women creatures! And as for that ould divil it's lucky for him, he's the good fellow he is. It isn't from any other man living scarcely I'd be taking the little hint he gave me just now. Odd bother him, I thought, till I met this chap, that the quakers were as slow a set of coaches as ever went up hill; but if this divil in a straight collar isn't enough to bother a Galway boy no matter. The divil a thing turns up, but his eye is on it, anyhow. Save the women folks: and is it come to that? Well, if that's the dodge, I may as well be off, and look after my young candlestick-maker, I suppose, for want of a better occupation;" and the brigadier too dived into the saloon, calling out, "Where is Miss Hogbin, where's Miss Hogbin, have any of you seen Miss Hogbin?"

At any other moment than the present, such an inquiry would have produced a roar of laughter at the utterer, but now all hands were too busy with tears to pay much heed to laughter, and in the excessive confusion of the moment the incident passed unnoticed.

Herbert, alone, seemed cool enough to pay any attention to the words.

"Ha, brigadier, my boy, is that you?" said he; and instantly guessing what the brigadier's feelings might be from his own, he added, "I think I saw the young lady you seek rush up on deck a few minutes ago with her father. She had her head wrapped in her petticoat, and the worthy gentlemen was carrying his small-clothes under his arm."

"By the lord Harry man alive, don't make me laugh now, the poor divils around will think it so unfeeling. But are you really in earnest?"

"As sober, serious, and earnest as ever I was in my life," answered Herbert; "and the first pair you find on the quarter-deck so rigged, hail them at once, my boy, for they are your friends. How is the ship lying now? Does she seem as firmly wedged as ever or is there a chance of her getting off?"

"Oh she's pretty hard set. But them infernal paddle-wheels, that are making such a row, will back her off soon, if anything can."

"Paddle-wheels," said Herbert, "surely you must mistake. I went down in the engine-room, and stopped them myself; our only hope is in getting on shore, before the ship can back off the ice, for the moment she floats again, she's making so much water, the probability is that she will go down in ten minutes."

"Then it's going down we have the very fairest chance on earth of; for I was remarking the playing of the paddles only the minute before I came down, more by the same token that I was d——ng pretty considerably the man who first invented, made, sold, or had anything to do with such a precious contrivance for leading a poor

fellow into a scrape, and then leaving him, when he has got there. Just listen yourself, can't you hear them?"

Herbert paused for a few moments from his occupation and listened, and certainly nothing could be plainer than the well-known—splash—splash,—roar—roar—of the floats alongside.

"Run, my boy, run quickly on deck, call down into the engine-room to stop those infernal wheels. We shall have the steamer slipping off the ice suddenly, and away we shall all be going to the bottom before we know where we are."

"I'll go, certainly, since you ask me," returned the brigadier; "but don't be alarmed about going to the bottom without sufficient notice; for, take my word for it, long before you get down so far as that, you'll know quite as much about it as you ever will. If we don't meet again till then, good bye, my boy. I came on board to help you out of one scrape, and I have just ended by getting you into another. Like the story my father used to tell,—Heaven rest his soul!—of Dan Macguire, his parish servant, whom he sent with a valuable cow to the market of Ballinasloe. The lad came home in the evening looking as blue in the face as you may be this minute, Herbert."

"For God's sake, do go and order them to stop the engine, and we'll hear your story after," interrupted our hero, almost driven to madness thus to see his friend trifling with the lives of all on board for the sake of a stale joke.

"Oh! the engine; devil take the engine! I won't keep you a minute; wasn't it you yourself who ordered us all to be cool, and ain't I the very perfection of your own order? So says my father to Daniel Macguire, 'What's the matter, boy, have you made a good market of the cow?'—'No, your honour,' says Dan, 'I could make nothing but beef of her; more by the same token,' says Dan, 'the devil would get into a field by the road-side, and all the argument I could use to her wouldn't be sufficient to get her out.'—'Why you natural born fool,' said my father, 'then why didn't you call some passer-by to assist you?'—'That's just what I did, sir; I saw a passer-by, and I called to him to assist me, and he was the very man that made the beef of her. For, says I to him, says I—,"

"Oh!" groaned Herbert, stamping his foot on the deck, "let me go! I'll go myself! But—then Nautila may come out and miss me. If the ship goes down before I get back, we're severed. Symonds! Symonds! is this trifling like you?"

The brigadier, without staying to answer this question, went on with his story—"So says I to the man, please your reverence, says I, for it was a parish priest, your honour will you help me to drive this cow out of the field?'—'That will I,' says he. 'Thunder and turf,' said my father, 'did he do it?'—'He did,' said Dan, 'and more by the same token he did it so heartily, he drove the poor beast right down into an old quarry pit on the opposite side

of the road ; and there she lays now, your honour, as good beef as ever was made, only a little too heavy for me to carry. And, though she was mighty aisy to drive down, not the priest himself could drive her back, barring he had the Pope to support him.' So it's just the same with me, Herbert, I've made such good beef of your cow, that—but, as I see you are in a hurry, I'll go about your engine. Not that it makes much matter what you do. It's a gone goose with us, anyhow." And the brigadier, darting up the companion-ladder, was lost sight of once more.

CHAPTER LXIX.

" There's nothing sure the spirit calms—
Like rum."

BYRON.

DURING the time the thoughtless although kind-hearted brigadier was insisting upon giving to Herbert everything that Dan Macguire had told his father, and, as a matter of course, everything that his father had told Dan Macguire, it may easily be supposed that our hero remained in perfect agony.

With strained ears he listened to the perpetual whirl of the engine as the paddles dashed and dashed away. And every instant it appeared to him inevitable that the steamer should once more glide off into deep water, and go down with all on board. Still, as he listened, he watched for the return of *Nautila*, and proceeded with his employment ; which was, indeed, the hastily cramming into a carpet-bag divers comestibles to support life, under the severe deprivation to which he foresaw it must inevitably be subjected on the iceberg.

First of all in went the whole contents of three large bread-trays which stood full of sea-biscuits, then a decanter nearly full of whiskey, then a couple of cold fowls, three loaves, a decanter full of brandy, one or two tumblers, the best part of a cold leg of mutton, a couple of boxes of phosphorous matches, and divers other little matters of the same description. Ever and anon turning his eyes to see if *Nautila* were ready, and then listening with a palpitating heart to hear if the paddle-wheels were still

going, or, more dire event than all, the ship appearing to make any sound as if moving off the ice.

"Confound that devil of a brigadier?" as he detected the engine still in full play, "some fresh maggot has most likely attracted his regard; and this is the way he leaves us in the most deadly peril. Will Nautila never come? Curls and bonnets are delightful things, but cost us rather dear when ships are going down at sea."

In the meanwhile, seeing one of the private cabin doors thrown open, the thought struck him that he might possibly find, thrown by as useless, some trifling little matter, the utility of which his greater experience in nautical matters might better enable him to decide. And, therefore, while waiting for the appearance of his goddess, he stepped in to take a look around him; not unlike those worthy Israelites who call at hall-doors to buy the old coats of the servants, but take care at the same time to bring a yawning bag with them to adopt, wherever they can be found, the new coats of the master.

Scarcely had Herbert entered, when almost the first thing that caught his sight was a couple of Mackintosh's best large pillow-cases, puffed out to their fullest extent, with fine brass glittering stop-cocks, &c. &c., peeping from behind the bed-clothes of the cot of some gentleman evidently fond of taking care of himself. To whip them out in an instant, unscrew the stops, let out the air, and pop them into his carpet-bag, was almost a single act, Mutton, fowls, bread, lemons, brandy, whisky, decanters, tumblers, matches, and Mackintosh-pillows all went together.

By this time one side of the bag was pretty full, Herbert, seeing nothing that especially attracted his regard, was about to leave, when he suddenly thought that a few blankets on the ice would be an especial accommodation. But here Nautila's voice, in the deepest distress, calling his name, drew him, with the swiftness of lightning, to her side. While her thankfulness at once more beholding him restored to her, it is difficult to express.

Clasping his hands as if they had been parted for an age, she exclaimed:

"Oh, I had almost died of fright! I was fearful we had missed you. Where is my father—have you seen him?"

"No," answered Herbert; but don't alarm yourself about him, he is too cool a hand not to turn up at the exact moment when he is most needed. Have you brought any blankets to wrap yourselves in?" he inquired, turning to Mrs. Cerberus.

"Dear me, no sir. Wouldn't it be very improper?"

"Wait a moment; they may save all our lives," cried Nautila, interrupting her frigid duenna, and darting once more to her cabin.

At this instant, our hero plainly perceived a scraping sort of motion beneath the bottom of the ship, and all his fears, lest she should launch off into deep water, became redoubled. Once more

he listened, and still, notwithstanding all the urgency of his requests to Symonds, he could still hear the eternal splashing of the paddle-wheels.

Long before affairs had arrived at this crisis, it appeared evident, from the outcry made by certain of the passengers, that they considered nothing necessary to their rescue beyond a good stout hubbub, and to raise this they all united with the most wonderful ingenuity. But though many of the shapes in which fright and terror had manifested itself, were ludicrous in the extreme, still some of their forms were most affecting, and all were presented in the strongest possible light.

The most sensible of the passengers had taken the hint given them at an early period, and scrambled, they themselves hardly knew how, to the ice. Extreme terror, which is, however, among the most selfish of the passions, induced many of these to leave on board to their fate ladies, who should have been trebly entitled to their protection—first, from their near relationship; secondly, from their sex; and thirdly, from their helplessness.

This, no doubt, was done under the bewildering conviction that the steamer was about instantly to founder. But when these parties beheld her remain perfectly fixed, to all appearance, in the ice, they then began to remember those hapless friends whom they had thus deserted, and several strove to return. But though it might be a difficult matter to get from the ship to the berg, while the furious paddle-wheel was whizzing madly in the air, and threatening instant death to all who approached it, this danger increased tenfold all the other difficulties, when a steep ascent, and the want of any regular ladder, rendered the passage back again from the iceberg to the ship almost an impossibility to those who were not seamen.

Name after name, therefore, was called out, and shrieked for in terms of anguish, disappointment, and even rage. Some of those who were left behind called on Heaven to forgive them their sins; others implored the Deity to pass by the bitter cup of death, and let them escape that once.

Three unhappy ladies, and an aged man, in all probability their father, who, up to this period, had been too sea-sick to venture out of their berths, were now clustered round a crucifix which the old gentleman held aloft while they all joined in loud and earnest supplication to almost every saint in the calendar for interference and aid.

Mothers were seen there, rushing to and fro, holding up their children, and screaming in sheer abandonment of fear.—Little children running about, seeking in the utmost agony for their parents.—Husbands looking for their wives—wives looking for their husbands—sisters for their brothers, and so on, each individual party adding to the general clamour of grief and fright, and loud, above all, the unceasing whiz—whiz—splash—splash—of the paddles. The

hoarse cracking roar of the steam, and the perpetual clank, clank of the relentless engine, which almost seemed to cry aloud to its maker—man:—

“Vain intermeddling fool! you dare to bring into existence a giant without mind—a monster without a heart—and still it shall strike, and stride, and struggle on, though you and all that belongs to your vain race are hurled to everlasting night by its agency!”

Up to this moment, Herbert had thought it utterly beyond the powers of man to exaggerate, by a single note, the dreadful and perplexing wail that arose on every side. He was wrong: scarcely had he noticed that motion in the ship’s timbers below, which we have mentioned, when there arose from the ladies’ cabin a cry, so shrill, so acute, so full of the most horrible notes the human voice can frame, it made the very flesh on his bones creep again while he listened to it.

“The water! The water is drowning us in our berths!” cried several unhappy women rushing into the saloon, with nothing but their night-dresses on, while our hero, for the first time, comprehended that the flooring of the cabins below must be beginning to be floated.

“Who will save us! Who will save us! Oh, what shall we do! Oh, have mercy on us! have mercy on us!”

These, and numberless other cries, in which the name of the Deity was mingled, and the extremes of human sorrow and human suffering met, so rang in the ears of Herbert, wholly unable as he was to succour or comfort even one tithe of the distressed ones, that he heartily rejoiced when Nautila once more appeared at his side, loaded with all the woollen clothes she could obtain. At this moment a quick footstep was heard above, and down came Mr. St. John.

“Didn’t I tell you so?” said Herbert to Nautila; and then, turning to the old man: “You are in the very nick of time, sir. Will you assist in bearing part of these clothes?”

“Certainly, Captain Herbert, and quicken your steps, for we have no time to lose.”

“Lead on, Mr. St. John, and we will follow you in a moment. I only wish to give one word of direction to these unhappy ladies, who seem to have no one to guide them.” Then, stepping back into the saloon, he said loudly, but briefly:

“Ladies, do not give way in this manner to despair. You may all be saved, if you will only act discreetly. Dress yourselves as fast and as warmly as you can; hurry on deck and come to us on the ice. We will assist you to reach it. The greatest danger that threatens you, is that of allowing yourselves to be overcome by your feelings, and wasting moments that can never be recalled.”

“One or two, having taken courage by this address, hurried

back to their cabins, while as to the rest, language would have been of equal utility addressed to a crowd of raving lunatics in Bedlam.

This, Herbert feared from the first; for having before now had to deal with panic-stricken people, it was solely from alarm as to the probable effects of fear that he had at first restrained from openly communicating the alarming state of the pump, well knowing, that when those who had proved themselves to have the best heads were seen to quit the ship for the shore, the great majority of observers would do the same.

CHAPTER LXX.

“Wherever danger press’d, or fierce alarm
Appall’d the timid, there his stalwart arm
Gleam’d through the host.”

As Herbert concluded the advice he had so kindly given to the sufferers in the saloon, he felt that his last duty was discharged on board the steamer. On the next moment, he had drawn Nautila’s arm through his own, and now, whether it was the will of Heaven that he should sink or swim, his soul was as tranquil as though the most propitious of stars shone on their happy union. On his way towards the deck, his eye lit upon a bundle of those folding camp-stools, with which steam-vessels are usually provided for the accommodation of loungers on deck.

“Stay, Mr. St. John, another moment,” cried Herbert, dragging out several of these, “let us each bear with us one of these stools: we may find them very serviceable on the ice.”

“A very good thought indeed, sir,” said St. John, “I know nothing more uncomfortable than a wet seat, unless indeed it be a wet bed, and even that we may gain before the morning dawns, perhaps. Here, madam, allow me to hand you one,” and placing one in the grasp of Mrs. Cerberus, the party once more proceeded.

Arrived on the quarter-deck, Herbert looked round, as if to take one fond and final farewell of the ship, on board which in the last few hours had taken place such important passages in his life. Here the thought suddenly struck him, that the best thing he could

do, was to take on the ice with him the compass ; but in another moment, he corrected himself, saying, "no, it is possible for any thing I can tell, that the ship may heave off, and float again ; and if so, provided there were only one solitary individual on board, it would be too cruel to deprive him, of perhaps the only means of navigation, poor and imperfect as that would be. So I'll be gone at once," and following Mr. St. John and Mrs. Cerberus down the quarter-deck ladder, the whole of our party now made for the fore-castle.

Having reached this, they found several of the passengers descending on shore, and several more still unable to do so from a want of sufficient accommodation. Running up on the paddle-box to see where he might best effect the safe descent of his friends, he had scarcely gained that elevated post, when he heard the hearty lungs of the brigadier singing out,—

"Long life to you, captain ! is that yourself come to life again ? here have we all been breaking our hearts to know what could have become of you. By my sowl, my jewel, the sight of you is as good for sore eyes as ever was Dan Macguire's receipt for making beef."

"Come, Symonds, we'll have the rest of that story by-and-by ; help me now, that's a good fellow, to get my friends on the ice. Go forward there, before the paddle-wheel, and call to one or two other stout fellows to come and hold a rope's end, which I will throw to you."

"I'm the man for that same," said Symonds ; and, turning round to a poor girl weeping and crying who stood next him, and who was in truth the lady whom he designated by the flattering title of the little candlestick-maker, Herbert heard him say, "Come a little this way, my darlint ; sure and here's Miss St. John coming herself, and she and I will console you to the best of our power."

Without caring to inquire why the sorrowing fair in question required consolation more than any other lady on board, Herbert, who felt the steamer grating more and more on the ice with every passing minute, as if she were gradually slipping off it, now hurried Nautila on to the fore-castle, and seizing the rope of the fore-topsail sheet, made the standing part of it fast to a cleat in the bulwark, and then threw the other end down to Symonds.

"Now, my boy," cried he, as he did so, "hand that along to three or four other fellows, and be sure to hold fast, or, as I am coming down with a lady in my arms, we shall either be dragging you into the water, or you will let us go there."

"Ay, ay," answered the brigadier, calling together two or three stout fellows, the foremost among whom was Broadbrim. "You must trust yourself entirely to me ; wait a moment, give me those stools," pitching them all of a heap on a dry point of the ice. Herbert next threw all the blankets on them, and then the heap of coats, cloaks, &c.

"Now, just bring the rope over that heap," continued he, addressing Symonds. The order was obeyed. Then, turning to Mr. St. John, he added, "With your leave, sir, I will now take Miss St. John down, and then return for you and Mrs. Cerberus."

"Don't trouble yourself about me," said Mr. St. John, "take down the lady, and I will follow."

Herbert nodded his head, and was about to speak, but a still more significant grate of the steamer's keel on the iceberg taking place at the moment, plainly indicated, that as her hamper became lessened, a tendency to float increased, and assisted to lift her from her bed on the ice.

Admirably as he had succeeded hitherto in keeping a perfect coolness throughout the terrible events of this last catastrophe, he now felt both sick and dizzy, as there rose to his mind a probability of the vessel suddenly running off her present point of fixture and sinking with him, while he should leave Nautila with Symonds, and go back for Mrs. Cerberus, who, poor woman, at that moment he felt as if he detested more than words could describe.

The very thought quickened all his struggles; lifting our heroine in his arms, and directing her to clasp hers round his neck, this just brought her rosy lips within reach of his own; a circumstance of which, I am afraid, the large amount of ice so close at hand did not prevent him from taking a very unfair advantage. Nautila shut her eyes; it was all, poor girl, she could do; at least, it was the most natural resource in her power; it would have been so shocking to have looked on, and have seen repeated and repeated the daring robberies perpetrated by her adoring lover. She blushed also deeply; but that she might safely do, for no one could discover the fact except Herbert, who thought she looked lovelier than ever; this then, it seems, by no means diminished the frequency of the offence, and she murmured, "Don't Herbert, don't, you will be seen."

But Herbert feared no seeing; he was pretending to arrange her shawl, to fasten her bonnet, and, in short, to pay a thousand of those *petits soins*, under cover of which young Cupid's arrows fly as thick as hail. Oh, Mr. St. John, where were your eyes?—where were your thoughts?—where was all your care? While your darling was in the very grasp of the lion, there were you, fumbling about with Mrs. Cerberus, offering to carry her reticule, and endeavouring to persuade her to relieve herself of her poodle. Well, well, it's no concern of mine; but if, after this last passage of the steamer's calamitous history, you should dream of trying to efface from your daughter's affections the image of Captain Herbert, all I can say is, that I think you will be wondrously mistaken.

At last, however, even Herbert could pretend to fasten shawls and to adjust cloaks no longer.

"Come, old boy, don't be all night," bawled the brigadier;

adding, in a tone that was intended for Herbert's ear only, "you will have time enough for all that sort of thing by-and-by."

In another moment Herbert had thrust his right hand through the loop of the carpet-bag which held his divers treasures, and clasping with the other the rope held by his friends below, he gradually lowered himself from the bulwark of the steamer, and slid down among the anxious group who were waiting to receive him.

Landing Nautila safe and sound, without any inconvenience, he scarcely stood to receive the thanks which she poured forth, when, springing back like a cat, against the side of his ship, and using his hand upon the rope with a rapidity that astonished those who were looking on, our hero once more gained the steamer, and jumped on board the ill-fated vessel.

"Now, Mrs. Cerberus, look sharp," quoth he. Allowing marvellously little time for her preparation, and almost before she could reply to the summons, he had seized her round the waist, much in the same manner that he had lifted Nautila, and stood poised upon the gunnel, ready to descend. And here, though we should find none to believe us, we do feel ourselves at liberty to assert, upon the unimpeachable veracity of a novelist, that Captain Herbert did *not* instruct the second lady to put her arms round his neck, even albeit she was by far heavier than her predecessor. Nor did he, we also venture with equal boldness, to declare, in any manner bring her lips near his; nor was he guilty of the slightest impropriety with his lips on hers.

Now, under the extraordinary circumstances of the case, although we do not feel called upon to give any explanation of his marked difference in the treatment of two clients, both of the same sex, we are ready to avouch that, without any possible loss of time, he slid rapidly back again to his friends, placing Mrs. Cerberus upon the ice without the payment of any toll or gratuity, of any kind or description whatsoever.

Looking back, immediately after this feat was accomplished, to watch how Mr. St. John redeemed his promise, he saw the old gentleman gallantly follow his example; and though freighted, both with Mrs. Cerberus's reticule and her poodle, as aforesaid, he came safely down to the spot where the rest were standing, without any mishap.

The friends, once more reunited, although on a most inhospitable station, shook hands all round, with a degree of warmth which plainly indicated the interest each had acquired in the eyes of the other.

"And now," said Herbert, once more snatching the rope out of the brigadier's hand, "I will just go back once more to the steamer, and see if I can help any of those unhappy women. It breaks my heart to think of their being left behind there, so utterly forsaken and forlorn."

"Herbert, my boy," said the brigadier, "the pitcher goes often to the well, but gets broken at last."

Herbert looked in the eyes of Mr. St. John; but though he doubtless had a strong opinion on the point, the latter forbore to say a word.

"Friend Herbert," quoth Broadbrim, "surely thou hast done enough for thy duties towards those on board the ship; remember thou hast duties, and those of no ordinary kind, to discharge here," looking at Nautila with an expression of love and pity, that seemed as plainly as words could express it, to say—"What will become of that lovely and devoted creature, whom you have attached to you, by every exertion in your power? What will become of her tender and delicate frame if you rashly throw yourself into the very jaws of danger, just at the very moment when she most needs all your love and protection?"

Herbert felt the forcible nature of this appeal, in its strongest sense, and gently pressing Nautila's arm within his own, whispered to her—"What say you, dearest, ought I not to go?"

"It is a bitter thing to part with you again," said Nautila, her voice scarcely articulate, "when the ship is in that dangerous position, that any moment might eternally divide us. But they are women, and they are helpless. They have indefeasible claims, therefore, on every man of honour or of courage, and you shall not wrong your own nature by forbearing to succour them, for my sake. Go! go! and may the Father of all mercies protect you:" and, pressing Herbert's hand to her lips, her warm tears fell upon it, as she thus surrendered him, with such true nobility of soul, to follow those generous impulses that formed his character and adorned her own.

"He will, He will protect me, never fear," muttered Herbert, scarcely less affected; and, dashing forward towards the ship, he was soon half-way up her side, over which could already be seen, wildly waving their arms for help, some of those unhappy ladies whom he rushed to save.

At this moment of intense excitement, when every eye was fixed upon him, a loud and sudden crack was heard, the sharp, piercing, shrill note of which rose above every other tone, and caused even the solid ice, whereon our friends were standing, to jar perceptibly beneath their feet; while, at the same instant, palpably to the observation of all, the bow of the steamer fell full half a fathom deeper into the sea.

"Oh, he is lost! he is lost!" cried Nautila, her nerves wound to the last pitch of endurance—her courage failing her—her stoicism all dissolved at witnessing the worst of her fears on the point of being realized.

Tottering back a few steps, and raising her hands before her eyes, as if to shut out the cruel sight impending, she swooned away in her father's arms.

"Come down, Herbert, sir! come down!" was heard, in the stern command of the old man.

"Herbert, my boy, jump down! Herbert, my boy, jump on shore! She is sinking!"

Still Herbert paid no attention.

He had heard the crack, and truly guessed what was at hand; but still, over rashly determined not to be swayed by fear, he remained bent on the resolution to get on board, in spite of all obstacles, and to save, at least, one of the unfortunate deserted.

"She is sinking! she is sinking!" chorussed a host of voices from the ice.

"Save us! save us! oh, save us!" shrieked the agitated frantic women from the ship.

The last prevailed; hand over hand, Herbert was rapidly gaining the forecastle, when Broadbrim, seeing how resolutely he was bent on his own destruction, strode forward over the sharp ice as near the rash climber as he could, and roared in accents little short of thunder,—

"Friend! friend! come back! thy maiden is dying in her father's arms."

Had a ball from that father's rifle struck our hero's heart, it could scarcely have produced more perfect paralysis.

Scarcely were the words uttered, when at once each limb seemed to refuse its further motion: at the same moment, another crack of the ice was heard, still louder than the first, and then slowly, but with rapidly-increasing speed, the steamer's bow sank down into the water, and plunging Herbert over head and ears, left him struggling for life amid the sharp points of the icicles, and the still foaming wave.

Broadbrim saw his danger; and fearing that he had been severely hurt, scrambled manfully onward, until he could reach a hand to his striving friend.

"Art thou hurt, friend? art thou hurt, friend? Speak, thee alarmest me," said Broadbrim, as Herbert, dashing the salt water out of his eyes and mouth, gasped for utterance, less from the effects of the blow he had received than from the severe cold communicated by the shock of falling into the water, the temperature of which, to one who had not taken a bath for some time, was of so paralyzing a nature as to render speech next to impossible.

As soon as he could gain utterance, the first words he gasped were,—

"Where is she, Broadbrim? where is she?"

"Fear nothing, friend," replied the quaker, who at once understood to what point all his solicitude extended; "nothing ails the maiden beyond a fainting fit; but as that is dying for a time, I took leave to paint the fact in strong language,

for I saw that to anything less, not even the voice of the adder——”

But before Broadbrim could finish his explanation, Herbert was already at the side of Nautila, who was just beginning to fix her eyes, with a returning consciousness but renewed agony, upon the rapidly departing steamer.

The presence of our hero acted as the very speediest charm on Nautila's illness,—entwining her arm within his in a manner that required no language to explain her determination to detain him at her side,—they both fixed their attention on the departing figure of the steamer.

Soon after the latter had struck upon the ice, a fog bank, which had hitherto been confined to the windward horizon, slowly extended itself down to the iceberg, and now appeared on the right hand of our party, gradually approaching the vast fabric of the ill-fated ship.

The moon shone out, still unclouded; and, just as the steamer entered the fog, was seen to be reflected, for the last time, from her glittering topsails, while, like a thing of life—some spectre monster of the ocean, the dark mass continued to back, back, and back away; the ceaseless din of her paddles resounding and echoing strangely in the silence of the night, amid the thousand and one glittering points of solid ice that overhung them, the smooth and polished surface of which seemed to produce in endless multiplicity, reverberations of every sound that arose below, while the perpetual roar of the steam, which was still heard bellowing forth from its confined aperture, formed a deep unearthly bass, appearing almost to come from the other side of the iceberg, and while it plainly told the hearers that the engine was deserted to its own guidance, suggested a thousand horrors from this fact alone, and seemed to be the last stroke wanting to knell forth the probable doom of all on board.

“As if any further horror were required to render the dreadful scene more impressive, at every revolution of the paddles a loud snort was heard from the panting engine; one almost could imagine that it grew sensible of the death at hand, and was imitating its maker, man, in his futile struggles to avoid that certain climax of his race—while at every such groan a faint and lurid glow of fire shot up into the air, accompanied now and then by a few sparks—till the gazers almost expected to see the topsails burst into a flame.

The fog now gained the spot which the huge struggler occupied, and still more vast and dim in the deluding and hazy atmosphere, grew the shadowy outline of the steamship, while a strange rumbling sound issued from the fog-bank, and for a few moments appeared to shake the very atmosphere that bore it.

Gradually this grew more and more faint, until nothing but a mere dim dark spot was seen in the distance, with every now and then a burst—almost volcanic—of the sullen red light we have

mentioned, reflected now more extensively upon all the edges of the fog, and caught from thence on the glittering pinnacles of the ice, especially upon a huge spar that projected outwards, and pointed full in the direction of the vanished steamer, as if almost to indicate, like the finger of destiny, that she was departing to return no more.

Gradually the hissing sound ceased to disturb the air, the red fierce glare lowered and lessened in its tone and intensity, flitted for a moment or two on the very summit of the fog bank, and then was seen no more. While on the sparkling broken edges of the ice, nothing appeared to glitter but a cold blue diamond-like reflection of the gorgeous moon, as she shone down with the most superb brilliancy upon that splendid and fairy-like, but thrilling isle of crystal.

CHAPTER LXXI.

“Cabin’d, cribb’d, confi.ed,
In thrilling regions of thick-ribb’d ice.”

SHAKESPEARE.

“Is she sunk?” “Where is she?” “Do you see her now?” “What has become of her?” were the questions bandied about from mouth to mouth—easily asked, indeed, but most difficult to answer. Who should take upon himself to say what had become of that vast and expensive complication of mechanical improvement and nautical architecture, refining elegance, and commercial enterprise? Who should say whether she still floated on the waters, happily reserved yet to gain her home, or was at that very moment ploughing her swift and noiseless passage down to those sunless solitudes, where so many of the precious records of our race—trophies of our valour—contributions of our wealth, and monuments of our persevering folly were already gone before them?

“She may be in the bank of fog, still,” said the brigadier: “and that buzzing sound, merely the going out of her fires.”

“Or she may have sunk,” significantly added Mr. St. John.

“Let us hope the best, friend,” interposed Broadbrim: “for it is quite clear that there are many souls still on board her. But since it can do little good to our ill-fated party to ask what has become of a craft that we shall never, in all probability, behold again, I think the best employment that we can make of time, will be to examine what steps are the wisest to be taken for our own safety. I presume, friend Herbert, this mass beneath our feet is that phenomenon in nature, of which we have all so often read, called an iceberg.”

“And small violence, neighbour Broadbrim,” interrupted the brigadier, “you do to the fact, when you may cast your eyes up yonder, and see an icicle hung out by way of sign-post, big enough for the steeple of any church in London, and more like a frozen Cleopatra’s needle than anything else I ever saw.”

“Didst thou ever see Cleopatra’s needle?” inquired Broadbrim.

“Why, not exactly seen it, but——”

“Then, friend, thou canst not talk of it more than other people,” interrupted the quaker, causing the anvil of the brigadier’s speech

to receive a hammer much more quickly than the gallant officer appeared to admire; while the other, continuing his conversation with Herbert, went on to remark: "I marvel greatly, friend, that we should meet ice of this description, and at this season of the year, on the passage from New York to England. Am I mistaken in supposing that all the writers lay it down that the meeting of such ice is not, of course, a peril properly incident to such a voyage?"

"You are quite right, Broadbrim," replied Herbert; "nor, under ordinary circumstances, should we have been exposed to the danger that now besets us, had we not, unfortunately, been driven greatly from our path by the gale, and then had to sustain the additional misfortune of losing our own compass, and been obliged to put our faith in one which has clearly had some error in it. By this means, we have got dreadfully out of our course; nor, unfortunately, have we had any means of setting ourselves right by any observation of the heavenly bodies, until this dreadful calamity has deprived us of the means of making use of their reappearance; and now I remember it—what a fool I was, never to think of bringing a sextant, or even a single quadrant, out of the steamer with me. Oh, this was an unpardonable neglect!"

"Never mind, friend—never mind. I only wonder how thou hast been able to do so much as thou hast. We can none of us accomplish all we desire, or even all we ought to attain. Be thankful, therefore, for the blessings that still surround thee. Of what use, save for vain curiosity, would it be to know where we are floating on this vast pile of solidified water? One thing is quite clear, that, good or bad, we must take our lot upon it, whatever that lot may fall to be; and here we must, all of us, perforce, remain, until we shall fall in with some passing sail to take us off; and surely, as we drift along the ocean, we can scarcely fail to do that. Yonder," pointing up to the ice, "are many pinnacles, of vast height, on some of which we may contrive to plant our pennant. Be of good cheer, then; all will go well with us yet;" and turning to Nautila,—“When those bright eyes, maiden, refract the light of chandeliers and the glitter of jewels in the pleasure-rooms of the modern Babylon, the remembrance of this melancholy night will give additional zest to thy festivity, and thou wilt be able to tell of one or two perils more than beset the paths of other travellers.”

"Right, good Broadbrim," replied Nautila, shaking the quaker heartily by the hand: "you are quite of my mind as to the way in which old Danger should be treated. Eye him proudly down, and he flees from you like a stricken dog;—crouch beneath his glance, and the bloodhound will not fasten on your neck with more relentless fang. You are quite right; no doubt we shall some day get back again to the halls of dear Old England; and whenever the night arrives that Nautila may recount her perils past, of one thing

be most certain, she will never be ungrateful enough to forget how much she owed, through all of them, to neighbour Broadbrim, and pledge his health most stoutly, even though she drinks no other. Under my roof, the board shall be ill supplied, depend on it," continued the animated girl, in conclusion, "that has not through life a seat of honour for you."

"Amen! amen!" said Broadbrim. "Heaven grant it may be so, and speedily," and the old boy appeared evidently moved by the grateful manner in which his services seemed to be held in remembrance by the "comely maiden," as he always termed her.

Herbert, who had listened to this conversation, took part in it only by a deep sigh, with an eye anxiously fixed on the glistening pile of ice aloft, and once he appeared about to mention the alarms that beset him; suddenly changing his intention, as he considered it would be needless cruelty to convey unnecessary dread before its time, he contented himself with joining the general consultation as to what course had better be pursued.

It may readily be imagined that this conference was one still more agitated, and, if we may use the term, irregular, than even that which had been held when the immediate and murderous attack of the mutineers was apprehended. For then, though the danger was great, it was comparatively distant, and in the meanwhile most of the parties enjoyed a degree of comfort; but now, the peril that menaced them was quite as great, inasmuch as it still amounted to a question of life or death, while it had already grown to be so close that all felt and groaned under it.

Almost all the parties who had deserted the steamer for the ice, seemed to have taken up their abode, in the expectation, one would almost think, of finding a Petersburg hotel upon it; since scarcely one of them had taken the trouble, or what was more likely, possessed the presence of mind to bring with them from the steamer any one of those articles of food or clothing, which they so much required.

The great majority of them, therefore, formed a crowd of half-naked, pale, shivering wretches, hungry to the last degree, from being roused out of their sleep and exposed to the cold night air, and all of them in the worst possible of tempers, at the difficulty, and danger, and suffering they already beheld on every side.

"My opinion is, that that steamer is still afloat, suddenly said one of the brawlers; "and what's more, I conceive we have been scandalously treated in being seduced, for I can call it nothing better, into coming, half-starved and destitute, on this lump of ice, and no accommodation made to receive us. For my part, I am convinced that that steamer has now gone off as well as ever, and it was nothing but a perfect piece of cowardice that seduced us into coming here."

Herbert's blood was in a moment excited by this gross piece of

ingratitude, and throwing himself before the brawler he exclaimed: "The fellow who has the audacity to make that speech must know it to be as false as his own character. I advised no one to adopt a course which I did not take myself. But that no gentleman here may be uneasy, or think that he has thrown away a chance by not remaining on board the steam-vessel, I now publicly inform you all, that I never came to the resolution of quitting her myself, until I found that on the very instant of striking, she had sprung a leak, and made five feet of water in her hold, and when I came out of the saloon, even that was already beginning to be flooded. I leave you, therefore, to form your own conclusions, whether the steamer is very likely to be floating now—whether you have not adopted the best course in quitting her—whether, in short, you are most likely to float long enough for assistance to reach you on this ice, or on board that vessel!"

"Come, come; that alters the case, Whiston," said some of the others around the malcontent, in a low voice.

"No, not much," rejoined the other. "At any rate, it's no apology for the impropriety of allowing the passengers, who have risked so much, and paid for their accommodation so highly, to be bundled on a block of ice here, in the middle of the Atlantic, at a moment's notice, without any sort of accommodation. How are we to have any food? or how are we to have any shelter? This comes of giving up the command to an officer of your Yankee navy—a pretty thing to call a navy. If we had had a lieutenant of the British service on board, see how differently he would have arranged it; we should then, no doubt, have had something like discipline observed, and every person would have been obliged to get out in his proper turn, and not before; and what's more, we should then have had a proper supply of what was necessary for our existence; and, seeing the sum we paid for our passage-money, I might add, our comfort. But this is a capital specimen of Yankee management."

Nautila, who had regained Herbert's arm, and during this speech retained it too closely to allow him to get away, grew at its close so indignant at the vulgar insults and impertinence, to say nothing of the base ingratitude it displayed, that she felt it was impossible Herbert could, in justice to himself, pass over the attack made upon him.

Walking up to the puffed-out upstart, Herbert saw at a glance that he was a new edition of one of those worthies who, when hard blows were going, had contented himself with remaining in bed; and suspecting the kind of person he had to deal with, simply said, "All that you have just uttered forms a gross tissue of untruths. Will you oblige me with your card?"

"Card, sir?—how am I to give you my card? You didn't give me time to get a change of linen, much less my cards; and after treating a gentleman in this way, you think to stop my tongue by

giving me an order. But, I'll have you to know this, sir, that I want none of your custom, nor that of any of the likes of you. I know what Yankee custom is, quite well enough, already. Give me your goods, and I will give you my paper upon the Brimstone and Sulphur Banking Company; the acceptances of which are sure to be paid, if you will only take the trouble of going to the devil to have them honoured. No, no, you are not going to take me in that way. These gentlemen and myself think we have been scandalously treated by you, and you shan't stop my mouth from saying so, by offering your paltry order, when the chances are ten to one we may none of us live to get back, and derive advantage from it."

"Order!" repeated Herbert, in amazement; "are you mad, sir; or jesting? What order have I ever dreamt of giving you?"

"Why, didn't you ask me this instant for my book of patterns, or card, or something?"

"It's a mistake; it's a mistake, I see, entirely," said the brigadier, coming up and quickly explaining. "This gentleman," pointing to Herbert, "who is my friend, having very sufficient reason to disapprove of your language, merely wished for your card to facilitate a little meeting of ten paces, on the first convenient opportunity."

"Oh! that was it, was it?" said the other, looking considerably alarmed, to the great delight of the brigadier, who throwing himself into the attitude of a man receiving and giving satisfaction, added,—

"That was it, sir; and that was all of it."

"Then, sir, I don't do that sort of thing," said the other.

"What!" ejaculated the brigadier, with a look and tone of contempt and abhorrence, to which no description can in the faintest degree approach; "do I indeed live to behold a man so dead to honour—so lost to shame—as to proclaim himself ready to offer an insult, and yet withhold the atonement due for his offence? Who are you, sir?—what are you, sir?—where do you come from, sir?—and where are you going? Let us be informed of every means of guarding against such a reptile, and more especially, sir, inform us, is there any such another disgrace to humanity left upon the earth? Tell me this instant, I say, sir,—this instant, that I may instruct all my friends to avoid him, wherever he may be found. Tell me, I say, sir, what are you?" and the brigadier, who amid all the confusion of the wreck had, it seems, contrived to lay his hand upon his favourite rattan, here shook it over the head of the delinquent, which plainly said, out with your title and description at full, or save your tile if you can.

"Never mind who he is," said Herbert, "it's quite clear he's some wretched tailor, and a very ill-mannered one too. Gone out, perhaps, to collect his master's debts in America, and vexed

at finding no opportunity for running off with them. Let him go."

"A tailor, sir!" said the malcontent, seemingly stung to the quick by this opprobrious epithet: "I'd have you know, sir, I'm no tailor; but a British merchant."

"A British merchant are you, sir?" repeated the brigadier, "then on my soul, sir, I blush for my country, to find it so badly represented; to say nothing of considerable doubts that rise in my mind, whether or not you may not be what Mr. Ebenezer Wire, lately defunct, would term a pretty considerable superfine liar; does that word suit you, Mr. British merchant?" demanded the brigadier, who seemed to proceed upon the belief, that no quarrel in the world ought to go on to any extent without his, brigadier Symonds, appropriating the principal part of it.

His opponent, who was shrewd enough to guess in some degree the character of his man, gave him back not the slightest reply, on which the brigadier, who appeared to be altogether overflowing with eloquence that night, returned at once to the charge.

"You a British merchant! A precious fellow you are, to take such a character upon you. By the Lord of Innisfail, there was a time when the British merchant had an honour as dear to him as the prince's,—ay, and what's more, would fight for it too to the full; and though I hear that a fashion has been set among London bankers of being more quick to inflict insulting words than to become answerable for them, I will never believe the degradation can become general. A British merchant are you? What's your merchandise?"

"What's that to you, sir," angrily answered the other.

"By the virtue of this cane, sir, answer me this instant, or I'll not leave a sound spot in your body."

"Well then, sir, I travel for my own house."

"Travel, sir, and for what do you travel; do you travel in labour, sir; or what?—speak sir. By the virtue of this cane, I ask you to speak out once more, or you'll repent it. On what business do you travel, sir."

Thus forcibly adjured, the unfortunate grumbler could evade no longer, but driven into a corner, exclaimed, with considerable anger,—

"Well then, if you must have it, our firm are playing-card makers, and that's what I travel for."

"Playing-card makers!" said the brigadier, with a peculiar whistle. "Well, by my soul, if that isn't the drollest concatenation, that I've heard of for some time, whether or no. And so, sir, because you make playing-cards, you thought a gentleman must want to see your pattern-book to keep his fingers warm upon the ice. Pray sir, do you make such a card in your pack, as the knave of clubs?"

"Of course, I do," said the fellow, with an accent of contempt,

and no slight anger at the comparative humility of his calling being thus publicly exposed before all the passengers towards whom, when on board the steamer, he had exhibited divers of those second-hand airs, with which vulgar people presume upon the ignorance of their companions and their own obscurity. "Of course, I do," said the cardmaker.

"And may you happen to know how to play cribbage?"

"I should think so," returned the other.

"Well then," said the brigadier, "just suppose we were playing at cribbage, and you had laid down the knave of clubs."

"Well, sir, what of that," demanded the cardmaker, apparently not much better pleased with this raillery than the previous threatening. "Well, sir, what of that?"

"Why, sir, simply this, that then I should be plainly entitled to give you one for your nob;" and the brigadier giving the unfortunate man no trifle of a blow from his fist, the grumbler was instantly laid prostrate on the ice. "And there it is," said the brigadier.

"Now, sir, having given you the reward of a grateful countryman, I trust for the future," proceeded the brigadier, "you will be a little less personal, and a little more polite; for know, least valiant of cardmakers, it was in my watch the steamer went on shore, and whoever makes any remarks upon that matter, good, bad, or indifferent, I shall hold him personally responsible to me;" and once more shaking his rattan over the fallen foe, the brigadier strolled back to his friends.

While the companions of the discomfited British merchant assisted him to rise in the best way they could, they muttered as they did so,—

"It's a pity, for that infernal Irishman's sake, we don't happen to have Boston Bill on board; he's the only person who understands how to manage that fellow."

Fortunately for the utterer, this sarcasm did not reach the ears of the brigadier, or it might have been repaid in a manner that would somewhat have surprised the speaker; as it was, Symonds and the others were now agreed on one point, that the less communion they had with the selfish part of the passengers the better.

It seemed rather unkind too, that companions in such misery should hoard up in exclusion any one blessing that others less fortunate did not possess; but when Herbert found in how disgusting a shape selfishness now showed itself, he perceived that preservation of his friends admitted of no course of action more generous.

Up to this moment no one but the brigadier was aware what was the store contained in the carpet-bag, which we have seen that our hero brought; and judging, from the specimen he had already had of the refugees, what the others were likely to be, Herbert

acceded to the proposition of Symonds, to form an exclusive fellowship with those whom they already knew and esteemed, and have nothing whatever to do with any other part of the passengers.

"Leave them alone, Herbert, to their own devices for a short time," said the brigadier, "and you will find they will, of their own accord, take themselves off, where they are likely to be better appreciated than they are by us. Then, my boy, as soon as that's the case, and we get ourselves to ourselves, we may have the luck of holding out till we get some chance of succour."

This was a stern doctrine, and Herbert could not at once adopt it, great as the respect was which he entertained for the sagacity of his friend. He however contrived to meet him half-way, and they at last determined to count out the number of perishing wretches before them, and giving a fair share to each, reserve such a proportion over for *Nautila*, as they might think was necessary, and then husband their own resources in the best way they could devise.

"Take my word for it," said the brigadier, "as sure as you do this, you will repent it. These ragamuffins will receive their whack now, with little or no thanks to you, devour it voraciously on the instant, and as soon as that is gone, will insist on being fed by those who have been more careful, and hoarded their means proportionably. If, therefore, you must be so mighty generous—which, by the lord Harry, I would not be if I were you—at least manage the matter with a little more discretion."

"But how?" said Herbert; "nothing is more easy than to talk of discretion, but how to exercise it?"

"Why in this way: calculate at once the number of mouths you have to feed, and what there is on which to do it; and every morning, if you will be so foolish as to give away that which you may want to feed yourself, why let the vagabonds come for their share, and trust no one of them with more than a day's store, and then it will be the interest of all to see that no one robs you in particular. Luckily for you, I don't believe there is an offensive weapon among the whole squad of them, or else I wouldn't answer for your not getting your throat cut for one of those basketfuls of hard tack. And perhaps, after all, that might be the pleasantest provision for a man, and supersede the necessity of eating one another."

"Come, come, brigadier, don't despond. I think your advice is good, and I'll follow it. Let us all go quietly from one group to another, and see if any of them have brought any provisions out of the ship except myself. I, perhaps, had better not appear among you, as I should be sure not to be told the truth."

"That is a good thought," said Broadbrim, setting off; "there will be certainly no amusement in handing out the proceeds of our forethought to others."

"Who may be equally well provided," continued Herbert; "that would be unwise, though I fear me there can be but few who are likely to bring anything to the general stock, but a most ravening appetite."

"Oh, devil fear their having that," said the brigadier; "unfortunately there never was a wreck yet without it; and I'm afraid we are not going to be the first example to the contrary. However, let us see what is to be made of the varmints," and the brigadier and Broadbrim parted on their errand, while Herbert busied himself in finding a sheltered nook of the ice, and there arranging the cloak of Nautila.

CHAPTER LXXII.

"Two casks of rum, besides a keg of butter,
Now form'd the sole provision of the cutter."

BYRON.

IN the course of half an hour the brigadier and Broadbrim, and Wynn Powell all returned to our hero to say that they had utterly failed in gaining the least account or intelligence of any other stores of provision than that which Herbert himself possessed; but, that all parties were mourning and lamenting, as was very natural, though unfortunately no one entertained a reasonable view of any likely mode of relief. And, finally, the only hope that existed of struggling on, was either selfishly and un pityingly to appropriate the whole of the viands they at present possessed for their own exclusive party, or else to adopt the course suggested by the brigadier, of giving out, the first thing every morning, to each individual person the exact amount of provision that they might be entitled to consume.

"Then," said Herbert, on hearing this state of the case laid before him, "I no longer hesitate a moment. With the utmost care that can be possibly adopted, we may all soon have to render up the last grand account which will be required of man. And I, for one, will not take upon myself the responsibility of having harshly treated my fellow-creatures in their worst extremity from any motives of selfishness, that may be defeated in a moment. If we are to rely on Heaven, let it be the reliance of humble and

honest hearts. If we are to ask assistance from the great Creator of us all, let not the prayer proceed from lips that have been mute to the exigencies of others. Though I gained what is here, the only privilege I ask is a double share for another."

"You have acted on the right principle this time," said Mr. St. John, in a low voice; but which sounded like music in the ears of our hero. "I have been waiting to see what course you would pursue, and now congratulate you on the decision; depend upon it, it will not go without its reward."

"It is rewarded, and amply so already," returned Herbert; feeling in his approbation a full repayment for the sacrifice he had made.

"I am not quite certain we are doing right," said Wynn Powell; "but, however, it's safest to err upon the better side of the two. And surely you had an undoubted right to dispose of that which never would have been here without your forethought."

"Well, then," said Herbert, "as we are all agreed as to the course of procedure, suppose we now calculate upon our resources. And, first of all, is this the best position we could have chosen in point of security for us? For as we must count out our store, it would hardly answer, in the midst of our deliberations, to be surprised by a sea washing away our whole stock at once."

The party here looked about them, and decided that a little platform of the ice, somewhat higher, would prove a much more commodious location than that which they now possessed. And thither, accordingly, our friends having repaired, they placed Nautila on one of the stools they had brought, in a corner sheltered from the blast; and, having wrapt her warmly up, and placed sufficient material beneath her feet to prevent the damp from annoying her, they proceeded to turn out the store which Herbert had carefully kept by him in his memorable carpet-bag.

When the whole of the viands were produced, and a due calculation made, it was found that with the most pinching economy, something like four days' subsistence might be gained.

"Well," said our hero, "that is better than I feared; though, as the song says, 'Nothing to brag of.' And this being so, and leaving a double portion, which I wish to have set by, we may as well console the unhappy wretches whose misfortunes have sent them here, by the intelligence that we can afford them this slight subsistence, and dole them out a meal at once."

The kindness and sound sense of this mode of procedure was at once recognised. And all hands were summoned to hear the pleasing announcement that there was yet corn in Egypt.

Like so many cattle at feeding time, in an instant all rushed to the point of their expected succour. When they were all assembled, Herbert addressed them, saying: "I am happy to tell you, fellow-sufferers in misfortune, that having brought from the

steamer a slight portion of food, I have calculated with exactness how far it is likely to go, when distributed among you all. As the very little that one person could bring away must prove totally inadequate for even one full meal for all of us, you will not, I am sure, be surprised to learn, that with every wish to do for you to the utmost of my power, the safety of us all requires that I should observe the most rigid economy consistent with the bare maintenance of life. By these means, it is just possible that you may be all supported for four days, before which time we hope some vessels will heave in sight, and come to our assistance. Still, as you will understand, that as this is an act on my part entirely voluntary, I shall, of course, feel myself bound to withhold the allowance from any individual who may become refractory, or oppose his wishes to the general welfare of us all."

"What is the use of stinting us?" said the cardmaker; "after all the parade about your generosity, if you meant anything by it, you might as well, I think, let us have one full meal at once, and a'done with it."

"To a person so foolish, or so malicious as yourself," replied Herbert, "I think it unnecessary to pay the slightest attention. If you think fit to accept the same share I shall give to every other person, and by which also I shall abide myself, you are welcome to enjoy it. If not, you may walk apart in silence by yourself; no one, I dare say, will care to interrupt your meditations."

"Oh, yes! thank you; I'm not going to be such a fool as to quarrel with my bread and butter. I'll take your beggarly share, since that's all you are going to give me, and more too, if I could get it."

"Well, then," said Herbert, "you won't get it. For as nothing is more necessary than to make an example of such saucy knaves as yourself, the share that I intended to give you, I shall now bestow on one of the ladies of the party. So you may just wait till the next meal before you get your allowance; and you won't get it then, unless you learn to be a little more civil. So, if you will take my advice, you will just turn your back and walk about your business: for the still worse sorrow than to have an empty stomach, is to see others fill theirs, while yours is denied the same gratification."

"What, sir! do you mean to say that you will share me out, after my having paid my passage money?" And the rebellious malcontent fumed and strutted most grievously.

"Ha! there my British merchant," said the brigadier, showing him the back of his broad hand, "do you think there's any convincing rason in that when it's doubled up? Have you the slightest remembrance of a little knock-down argument it had the honour of affording to you a short time since; because, if so, cut your immortal—incise your sprout, or, as you are a cardmaker, do

us the honour to drop your P. P. C., and retire upon Coventry allowance."

Eyeing the brigadier's stout brown hand for a few moments in silence, the British merchant turned up his nose, muttering, "Well, as I'm not hungry it doesn't signify much," and walked away.

"Before you go," added the major, "just take this little moral story to reflect upon, you'll find a deal of pith in it; it may sarve you in good stead for the rest of your life to come, and that is just a short and concise history, proving your great resemblance to Jem O'Brian. Here, you spalpeen, listen to me, unless you want another touch of my convincing rasoner. Jem O'Brian, do you see, was his mother's darling, and once upon a time the old woman brought him and his sister Sue home from the fair a rare present; it was some of the rare Brazil nuts, and sure they were the first the old woman had ever seen in her life, and it's her darling Tim that she does give the choice to, and Tim you see who was just such an elegant modest boy as yourself, Mister Marchant, was for ever wanting nothing more than all that was given to him, and all that he could get beside. So as soon as he had the choice before his sister—may-be he didn't leave all the small ones to her, poor girl—but whether or no that was the case, I promise you, Tim went away into the chimney corner to eat all his nuts by himself, and presently he came out blubbering fit to break his heart. 'Sue, girl,' says he, 'hand me back some of those nuts directly. In my lot there isn't one that hasn't turned out full of stinking powder, or rotten kernels.'—'No, no,' says the father, 'Mister Tim, it was you that just had your own choice of it, and as you were greedy enough to choose all the big nuts, little Sue, here, who was content to have anything you left behind, shall enjoy her sweet small ones in peace;' and ever after to his dying day, whenever Tim's grasping so led him into a mistake, he never wanted some kind sowl at hand to whisper in his ear, 'Tim, my boy, you would choose the large nut again, would you?' I say Mr. British merchant, does it strike you at all, by accident, that you have got hold of the large nut this morning?"

But the solitary was too wise to venture on any reply, and whatever he might think on the subject he declined to let his cogitations find a voice.

The allowances were duly served out to all the rest, who received them with much more thankfulness, from seeing not only the example that had been made of the cardmaker, but also the powerful support, ready at any time to enforce Herbert's regulations; soon after this event the sun began to rise. As unfortunately our party had little or nothing to distract their attention, their whole soul was given to alternate consideration of what their own fate would be, and the most minute examination of the face of nature.

Indeed, it was worth no slight amount of pain and suffering to have seen the matchless spectacle presented that morning by the rising sun, and the gradual change of light in the heavens, as the moon subsided in one quarter, and the orb of day advanced in another.

At first a faint blush appeared in the eastern horizon; and just where the light was the strongest, the sharp clear edge of the iceberg rose, as if it had been cleft by rule, and wearing one uniform blue cutting edge and brilliant surface, it soared above the sea, as nearly as Herbert could calculate, some three hundred feet; in some parts opposed to the light, and darkened by the deep shadow; in others allowing the rosy tints of the morning to glitter through, and warm its transparent substance with the most exquisite rays. Every point here and there throwing off the prismatic colours like brilliants, and the whole colossal berg drifting slowly before the fresh morning breeze, with a slow oscillatory motion, half ploughing, half riding over, the still heavy waves that the gale had left, with a grace and dignity indescribable.

Presently the first limb of the sun appeared above the sea, and, in an instant the shining mass which had before appeared like some mighty gothic hill of polished glass, now contrasted against the clear blue of the sky above, its thousand minarets and pendants cased in burnished gold, until at length, when the sun had fairly risen, and shot its cheering light across the waters, the singular isle which bore our shipwrecked friends, carried the appearance of some gigantic jewel cut into a thousand fantastic shapes, and glittering with every colour under heaven.

Beautiful, however, as the sight was, it at last began to lose its charms, even in the eyes of the most romantic of those, whose chances in life it had so direfully interrupted, and whose span was drawing to so short a close.

The cold that the unfortunate passengers felt was most intense, and though the wind luckily was not blowing very high, still it whistled round the sharp angles of the ice, seeming to pierce to the very marrow of the sufferers; and as it did so, it uttered that low melancholy whistle which is often found to affect the mind with a most melancholy depression of spirits, more especially when there is the least predisposing cause.

The rays of the sun, though they gave a most magic effect to the picture, appeared to shed little influence on the shivering sufferers, being scarcely able to pierce through the frozen air with any perceptible degree of warmth. The first day, it is true, the change of life so far had its charm, that they did not feel, in all its bitterness, the terrible calamity that had befallen them. At stated hours they came to the spot where they were to be fed, with a wondrous punctuality, and the voracity of starved hounds.

To guard against the effects of any rapacity, or any attempt to gain more than each was entitled to claim, the scanty mess

was parcelled out beforehand, so that all might see that it was distributed without the slightest regard being had to distinction of persons; then, as each name was called over from a list taken down in pencil, the nearest lot was passed from hand to hand until it reached its greedy devourer. The whole body of the refugees were made to cluster upon one little platform of ice before they received their portions, and to pass off to a different spot after the food had been given to them. By this means, none were enabled to make a double claim, and the strong were prevented from snatching away the food of the weak; precautions at which we smile and wonder, on reading the history in the midst of plenty; but the wisdom of which was doubly apparent, as day by day glided by, inflicting in its progress all the pangs of starvation upon the unhappy wretches, who strove and struggled, and hoped for succour from one disastrous day to another.

Many of these parties, especially those who had been in the fore cabin, appeared to suffer greatly from the remembrance of the worldly losses they had sustained. And oh! the first bitter night of exposure to the inclemency of such a spot on those delicate female frames, which, up to that period, had never known the want of a single luxury! There they lay, huddled together, in corners of the ice, sheltering themselves from the bitter searching wind, their toes and fingers hourly becoming frost-bitten, and the frozen mass gradually returning to its liquified state wherever it came in contact with the warmth of the human bodies that lay upon it, aching, shivering, bewailing and cursing the dreadful destiny that brought them there!

With that generosity that marked every portion of her character, *Nautila* distributed right and left, to her fellow-sufferers of her own sex, all the additional clothing and covering she could persuade Herbert to let her spare; he meanwhile protecting her by all the care human ingenuity and affection could devise: her seat formed by one of the camp-stools, her feet kept dry by one of the india-rubber air-cushions, her figure wrapped from head to foot in three large blankets, and Herbert's ample camlet mackintosh thrown over all, dreadfully severe as even then she found the night to be, it passed over her with comparatively harmless effect.

At length, the second morning dawned, but still no sail could be descried on the vast horizon. Succour seemed as far off as ever; hope was almost dead, and starvation pressed them on all sides.

Of those few who, on the preceding night, had answered to their names, receiving their scanty share of sustenance, washed down by one single teaspoonful of spirit, three men were now found among the crannies of the ice, frozen to death; while several more appeared so exhausted and benumbed, that a similar fate could hardly be averted from them.

In the hope, however, of so doing, the allowance of the dead was given to the sick. While those who called themselves among the strongest of the party, instead of receiving their portion with thankfulness, as on the preceding day, could scarcely be kept within due bounds by any moderate degree of force, and howled, and raved, and cursed at the smallness of their share, in a manner that amply proved the wisdom of the brigadier's suggestion, as to not giving them their whole ration at once.

CHAPTER LXXIII.

“Suicide should be a crime most despised by men of courage.”

LAS CASAS, NAPOLEON AT ST. HELENA.

Nothing more plainly marked the feelings of the party on the iceberg than the manner in which they watched the sun rise for the second time.

On the first day, every eye was fixed on the glorious orb, and exclamations of delight, wonderment, and pleasure broke forth from every lip.

Now, scarcely twenty-four hours had elapsed, when, with the exception of the individuals composing the immediate party of our hero, scarcely any one cared even to turn an eye towards that object which yesterday had imparted so much delight.

To the eyes of Herbert and Nautila, the second sunrise appeared, if possible, even brighter than the first.

The brigadier, too, and the young candlestick-maker, seemed fully alive to the glories of the gorgeous hour.

Broadbrim marked the advent of the god of day just as he would the arrival of a bale of cotton—a thing to be seen to, and noted, but nothing particularly charming, after all; while Mr. St. John's pale, melancholy, thoughtful face was turned towards Apollo's disc with the same calm and placid smile that Herbert had so often witnessed with affectionate interest in the happy quietude of the forest.

“What would I not give, dearest Nautila, if we were there at this moment! Blessed with everything that can make life glide

serenely and cheerfully away! Ah, those were happy, happy, happy days! Even then I thought I prized them to their utmost; but, oh, how far short did my gratitude fall beneath their real worth;—would that I had prized them more! Viewed from this dreadful solitude, this frozen point, beyond the circle of the world's existence, what could crowns or sceptres, monarchies or dominions, yield to me half so delicious as those long, happy days? When I remember those joyous and delightful rides—those sunny fishing parties—those breezy sails; and more than all, those heart-touching, moonlight rambles, how bitterly, thrice-bitterly, do I curse that act of folly by which I not only forfeited all the calm enjoyment of such exquisite happiness, but have brought this dreadful, gloomy fate on you.”

“Why, dearest Herbert, disturb yourself with such vain imaginings? Just listen to what were my thoughts, and you will then see how unnecessarily we poor mortals raise up additional sorrows to all those fate may heap upon us, how severe soever these may be. I was, at that very moment, bitterly upbraiding myself for having been the unintentional cause of ending, on this miserable spot, a life like yours, which might otherwise have proved of the greatest service to your country, and, at any rate, would have led you on, with all your energies, to high honours and distinction.”

Before Herbert could answer a word in reply, up came the brigadier; and, prefacing his remarks with a deep sigh, exclaimed:—

“Well, Herbert, my boy, if I’m not the most miserable devil this morning on the face of creation!—no matter.”

“You, brigadier!” exclaimed both; “is it possible that you can look around you, and see human suffering in all its most dire forms, and be so ungrateful as to give utterance to the speech you have just made?”

“My dear fellow, it’s just the beholding of all this misery around me that makes me so wretched at this moment. How can I help thus feeling, when I see that I am the very unfortunate devil that is alone to be blamed for all that’s happened?”

“Well, we cannot help smiling at that, brigadier,” said Herbert. “And now I’ll tell you the very conversation that has just occurred between us.”

And on this, Herbert narrated the various self-accusations that he and Nautila had been making.

Despite all his sombre fancies, the brigadier could not help clearing in aspect when he found that there were two other people among the late passengers of the steamer who seemed to think themselves equally to blame with him.

“By this and by that, Herbert, my boy, it all comes to this:—we are like the farmer’s conceited horse, who, because he hap-

pened to draw the plough, took leave to tell his master, Barney Malone, that he was entitled to half the crops of potatoes! 'You, you big thief!' said Barney, 'entitled to half the crop, when, by this and by that, it was these very hands sowed them myself.'—'Oh, you sowed the poratees, did you?' said the horse. 'Long life to you, master; I never saw you sowing the poratees, or I wouldn't have been so bowld as to ask for half the crop.'—'Be Gor, and you're a pretty fellow,' says Barney Malone; 'and how do you think the poratees grew there without sowing?'—'Well, by this showing, I thought no more about it, beyond the little I saw; and that was, wherever the plough went first, the poratees grew after it.' And so in this matter," quoth the brigadier, "it seems we have been reasoning almost as ably as the horse. Heaven bends our necks to the yokes, but the hand that sows the seed is above us all! And, by my honour, I'm more obliged to you both than I can possibly tell; for since sunset, last blessed night, I've felt so miserable, more than once or twice, that I have hardly known how to keep from getting on one of these pretty icicles that hang about here, and taking a last plunge off into blue water, which would at least close my eyes and ears to all the sorrowful sights and sounds that are going on round us——"

"I am exceedingly glad, then, that you did speak to us," interrupted Herbert; "for nothing could have been more foolish or more cruel than so to have acted. Remember, we are all now pulling as it were in one boat, and whatever temporary relief suicide might be to yourself, it would be a base desertion to leave us in the midst of all our difficulties, now we so materially depend upon you for keeping up the already weakened discipline, by which alone we are prevented from being torn to pieces by the hungry beings that surround us. In the thick of the battle, I am sure you would have been the last man to turn your back upon companions who relied upon you for assistance; and what was the danger that then surrounded us, compared with the present?"

"Don't talk of it," said the brigadier: "I see it was only a feeling of insanity that ever permitted such a thought; and leave you who will, till life goes out, inch by inch, by starvation, I won't give in. So now let's go and see whether we can render any assistance to these poor spiritless creatures."

And the brigadier went off to lavish on all around him for the morning, those powers of amusement and drollery which had helped, in so eminent a degree, to wile away the tediousness of the first forenoon.

Now, however, his charm seemed gone, his rod broken, his hook buried full fifty fathom deep. Yesterday his fellow-sufferers had listened to his stories, applauded his songs, obeyed his call to sing in their turn, laughed roundly at his jokes, played at leap-frog with him on the ice, and enjoyed the delights of a small slide

that he had made on one of the smooth surfaces that here and there intervened between the sharper points. Now, all spirit and energy seemed fairly crushed and beaten out of them. Faint from want of food, benumbed from excessive cold, sucking pieces of the ice to quench their thirst, they lounged about, their clothes saturated with half-frozen water, gazing with a sullen apathy of despair around the vast circuit of the horizon.

The brigadier, unable to endure this scene, was determined, since no better occupation offered itself, to take a pocket-handkerchief and his favourite rattan, and sticking this on a point of the cliff which might form the highest attainable elevation, to trust to its being seen by some vessel which they themselves might not be able from a lower post to detect. There was at least some utility in this expedition, and off he set.

After several hours' labour, and several escapes from falling down severe heights, he obtained a post about half-way up the iceberg. Here he beheld a large cave, of very much the same sort of shape as those numerous caves which every ordinary rock presents. When he first beheld its arched brow, he was some feet below the point in question, and looking to see how he should get thither, could not help fancying that he traced something like a foot-track winding sinuously towards it. The brigadier's heart thumped within him as he contemplated the possibility of some other unfortunate beings having been cast away upon this identical iceberg; and who knew? perhaps he might come upon their mouldering skeletons!

In this idea, there was something so horrible to the brigadier's feelings that he began to reason within himself whether he should proceed or not, but in a moment after, blushing deeply to find that he had been betrayed into an emotion not quite devoid of fear, he resolved to push on, though he should meet Old Nick himself.

Still he followed the path, and still at every step his former suspicions were confirmed; not only was there a clear route leading to the cave, but all the sharp points of the ice seemed broken and rounded off, as if by the frequent passing of parties, going up and down.

"Poor creatures!" exclaimed the brigadier; "I wonder how long they have been lying here! They must be dead, or they would have heard us coming on shore,—that is, coming on ice. That infernal steamer made noise enough for landing of the Prince of Orange. Well, I suppose—as they didn't die in what is called the odour of sanctity, they will have another sort of odour, which may be rather powerful and unpleasant," and the brigadier here produced his pocket-handkerchief, placed it to his nose, and pausing for a moment, admired the superb expansive view of the sea spread round far beneath him, like a dark blue mantle, and bearing

no spot upon its breast save the soaring cluster of icicles on which he stood, refulgent in the golden pride of the morning.'

"It's very fine!" sighed the brigadier, "but I say with old Shakspeare in the *Tempest*, 'Oh, for a few solid acres!—though it was only the bog of Allen.'"

Without pausing to inquire in what part of the *Tempest* the bog of Allen is particularly described, we will follow the footsteps of the brigadier, who, walking as slowly as a mute at a funeral, and with much the same sort of half-a-yard-of-face, at last deliberately gained the cave, and peered round the corner. Halting as he endeavoured to look down into the overshadowed chamber, a matter rather difficult from its position with respect to the light, the brigadier exclaimed: "Ah! there they are, just as I imagined; there they all lie, huddled together in a heap. No doubt they got close together to sleep, for the sake of warmth. It may be I'll find some papers in their pocket that will let me a little into the light of their history. Poor gentlemen! evidently not seafaring folks, or they wouldn't all be dressed in brown great-coats! They don't stink much yet, either," removing the handkerchief from his nose. "Can't have been here long," taking another step towards them, and peering down, for the excessive cold had made the brigadier's eyes water to that degree, his peepers were not in the best order.

At this moment a simultaneous emotion agitated the "poor gentlemen" in the great-coats; the mass became suddenly animated—two large, fierce, dreadfully blood-shot eyes were visible, and a terrific growl made the whole cavern and surrounding icicles ring to its powerful note—and up one of the "poor gentlemen" started, showing the most formidable set of tusks, sitting on one pair of shaggy legs below, and moving rapidly two more aloft, armed with claws sharp as an eagle's, and of considerable length.

"By Jasus! an old bear and five young ones!" gasped the brigadier. "Well, fortune, you ould divil, since you are determined to ruin me entirely, I suppose you will have your own way. And me, too, left without so much as a clasp-knife to bleed a vein of that infuriated old termagant. Well, it's no use trying to conciliate her, any way," seeing that the bear was going to spring on him. "So if one of us must die, ma'rm, come on says I; though, by this and by that, I never offered you any provocation before, as I know of—it's quite clear you have me at ten paces, and no mistake. Oh, Dennis Symonds! Dennis Symonds! Isn't this a proper judgment on you for leaving your home without your own darling pair of satisfactorys," alluding to his duelling pistols. "Ha, now then, here she comes!"

The brigadier, who, while he had been holding this confabulation with himself, had, as a last expedient, thought of the office of Jack Ketch, rapidly made a ship-knot in his silk handkerchief, and

as he saw the famished and infuriated creature spring towards him, he clapped his back against the icy sides of the cave, hoping by this means to prevent Bruin from so easily giving him that loving hug for which bears are so remarkable.

As the animal drew close to him, the brigadier watched his opportunity, and with his heavy-booted foot, gave it a most severe kick just about the midriff. The eyes of the animal almost flashed fire as it staggered beneath the pain of the blow, and showing all its frightful teeth, on it came, plunged its sharp claws on both sides at the brigadier's back, whipped him out of his post against the ice in a twinkling, and commenced giving him such a squeeze that the brigadier thought his rib-bones would come out at his ears.

It was a trying moment for the son of Mars; he felt that there was no looking back, and though scarcely able to draw breath himself, his arms being at liberty, he flung them nimbly round the bear's neck, passed the end of the handkerchief through the slip knot, and drawing it as tight as he could round Bruin's throat, secured it with a hitch, and then, for his very life, commenced twisting it round with his hands, like an extempore tourniquet.

To this extreme attention on the brigadier's part, Bruin was far from insensible. His eyes seemed starting from his head; but that not assisting him much, he struggled fiercely to make his teeth meet in the brigadier's nose. The gallant officer, however, succeeded in averting that calamity, and keeping his antagonist at arm's-length. Though writhing in agony himself, he proceeded, with iron nerve, to screw and screw the neck of his enemy. The bear's exertions now became extreme. Again and again he pressed his prey to his rough shaggy breast, until the brigadier thought he could endure no longer. Still hope supported him, and he screwed away once more. Now the bear swayed him violently round from side to side, and tried to throw him down; in return for which, Symonds, who had learned to wrestle in Cornwall, gave him every now and then a kick with such severity, that Bruin soon seemed inclined to resolve the matter into a stand-up fight. Once more he hugged and hugged, and squeezed the brigadier; and the brigadier screwed and screwed away at the bear.

"D—n you for a 'poor gentleman in a brown coat.' Are you getting sick at last?" cried the brigadier, as he felt the grasp of the creature somewhat relaxing. This gave him fresh hope to proceed, and screwing round the handkerchief another time, a choking sound was heard in Master Bruin's throat; his eyes grew dim and lustreless, his fore-paws gave two or three convulsive twitches, and suddenly the brigadier found his lungs allowed once more to take a little breath into them. The limbs of the large creature fell powerless by his side, and presently rolled back upon the ice, carrying in the fall its nearly exhausted conqueror with it.

"By the Lord of Innisfail, this is work that will warm a man's jacket, whether or no!" gasped the major, as soon as he could speak. "Oh, you pertickilar blessed vermin, if I haven't to thank you for a good breathing, no matter! Oh! by St. Patrick! have I any breath left in me, I wonder?" and for some moments the brigadier lay panting and powerless on the ground.

Presently the body of the bear gave one convulsive twitch. In an instant his antagonist was on his legs.

"Oh, then, by the mother of Moses! have you not had enough yet!" said he, giving the brute one or two extra turns. But these were unnecessary, life was now thoroughly extinct; and allowing the knotted handkerchief still to remain in the position where it had effected such essential service, the conqueror took his seat on the body of his victim, and looked around.

CHAPTER LXXIV.

"I am monarch of all I survey,
My right there is none to dispute ;
From the centre all round to the sea,
I am lord of the fowl and the brute."

COWPER.

THE young bears, who certainly had "all their sorrows to come," now gathered round their murdered parent, seeking in vain for that acknowledgment of their endearments which, no doubt, the deceased was accustomed to give ; and, soon perceiving how the case clearly stood, they commenced no inconsiderable lamentation.

"Weep away, my pretty dears ! weep away !" cried the brigadier. "And sure, it's myself that honours you for waking the corpse with such filial affection. Weep away, my little dears !—and if you only knew what cause you have for blubbering, it's yourselves, may-be, this very morning, would pipe your eyes a little more. Oh ! if you could only estimate the hungry appetites and short allowances that I have just left down yonder !—If you could only see the British marchant, and the whole tribe of the others, gathered up in a corner, blowing their fingers for want of a better occupation, it's myself you would be saying your prayers to, to have mercy on your youth and unfortunate situation ! But public duty compels me to say, that the whole squad of you must be roasted for dinner, if there's a spark of fire to be had on the blessed island, anyhow. If not, shocked as my delicacy is to record the fact, you stand an inimitable good chance of being devoured raw. And, oh, dame Fortune ! you to whom I behaved with so little reverence or gratitude—before it was quite certain which was to have the best of it, me or the bear—accept my sincerest apologies. Faith, I had rather have won this spoil by my own right arm, and in peril of my own limbs, than the finest estate in all Pennsylvania, seeing the chances are mightily against one's ever succeeding to get a peep at it. Oh ! and it's myself, then, that has been sorely grieved since we came ashore on this island of coldness. To think what a precious scrape an old soldier has got these poor devils into by going to sleep upon his watch ! But now that I have got them a good belliful by the exertions of my own right arm, my conscience is a little aisier. Oh ! jewel of

a poor gentleman in a brown coat," cried the brigadier, flinging himself in an ecstasy upon the body of the great bear, "how happy will I be when the hour comes to lug you down, on my shoulder, and give you to the poor starving boys below there! But how to do it?—that's the question. You're so plaguy heavy, you old thief, that I shall never be able to carry you down alone; or if I did, I couldn't take your darling tender little ones with you. Oh! what a fine tender piece of eating would be lost if they should escape in the meanwhile. They may get up on some of these infernal Cleopatra needle points sticking up around us on all sides. Let me see; if we keep the young ones alive, we've nothing to feed them on, and they will only be getting thin for no purpose: and in these latitudes, I suppose, meat will keep for ever; that is, barring man's appetite, which is a sad obstacle to the keeping of meat at all times;—and it's quite clear that if I give these little darlings a touch of my handkerchief, they can't well run off after death, though, if they have any of their mother's way of thinking in them, they would be plaguy likely to do so before. Oh, then, my little darlings, loth though I am to wound your innocent feelings, every mother's son of you must pass under the bowstring. Oh! it's no use making a row about;—it's very hard, I know, and shameful, and so on; but go you must, and die you must!—so, now for the murder of the innocents." And, catching hold of one of the poor little wretches, the brigadier's strong gripe was soon upon him; round went the handkerchief over his neck,—and, after a few convulsive struggles, all was over.

In this way, one after the other, all the toddlings found their innocence of no avail. They were all strangled, one after the other, and placed carefully in a heap, while the brigadier strung the mother, in the best way he could, ready to put across his back, so soon as he should have accomplished the chief purpose for which he came, namely the planting some sort of flag on the highest pinnacle that he could find.

Some little difficulty attended this operation, from the hard nature of the substance in which he had to plant his rattan; but, breaking off several chips of the ice, which he found around, he succeeded at length, in attaining the object that he sought; and, finally, placing the fore-paws of the bear over his shoulders, having previously secured them with his black silk handkerchief, his bandana being now used to flutter in the breeze, he began, with weary steps and slow, to retrace the steep descent.

This was not to be accomplished without considerable danger, and the brigadier fairly bent under his heavy burden, till at last he became so tired, that he was fain to lay it down and halt. He now determined, since it was thus oppressive, to content himself with pitching the carcass from point to point, though sorely grieved to think that such a process would deteriorate from its quality. Wherever a long slide occurred, he drew it tenderly

after him, and where nature had not provided this accommodation for the conveyance of bears' flesh, he was obliged to have recourse to the more summary, but less prudent measure before-mentioned.

At last he came within sight of his unfortunate comrades, and at very little distance above them. Taking his bear once more on his back, in a manner that might have befitted Hercules, he shouted out,—

"Hallo, boys, below there! Herbert!—Neighbour Broadbrim, look up here, and bid your starving vitals rejoice! Do you call this nothing for a set of dogs on banyan days?"

The shout that followed when the brigadier was recognized, went to his heart in a trice, and skipping about like a child with a new toy, as all hands below advanced to meet him, he descended, dragging the carcass after him. When at length he arrived in the midst of them, everything short of divine honours was paid to the bear-slayer, as he recounted the difficulties he had had to surmount, and the peculiar manner of his battle and victory.

A consultation was now held on all sides, as to how they should proceed to cook their new food. The question was then raised, what combustibles they had with them. Herbert quaked for the comfort of his lady-love, when he saw the gaze of the party directed to the camp-stools; but, after much argument, he succeeded in persuading them, that as the materials for the fire were so scanty, they would scarcely be sufficient to warm the carcass of the bear half through, it was quite evident they must at last come to eating the animal in a raw state, and they might as well do it at first, when they would encroach on the comforts of no one, as to postpone it for a meal or two, when their delay would have deprived all the more delicate of the passengers of a very great convenience.

It was then agreed, that those who preferred a scanty meal of dressed food to a full one of raw bear's flesh, should form themselves into a separate party, and receive their rations from the diminished stock of Herbert's carpet-bag; while the more robust, who were not particular to a shade, might cannibalize on Mr. Bruin.

In the fulness of his joy, the brigadier now communicated the interesting fact, that the bear's five cubs were all lying snug and safe in the cave where he had first discovered this vast treasure. In an instant, off started several of the party to bring down this addition to their stores. But, raw or cooked, the brigadier was inexorable on one point, namely, not to waste the plenty Heaven had sent them, but to portion it out in a full and stated allowance to each man.

Out came all the knives, and the saving proposal of the brigadier was speedily carried into effect; half the bear was distributed to different claimants, the brigadier first claiming, and having

instantly allowed to him, the splendid brown coat which had so nearly led him into a fatal error. The young cubs were then skinned also, and their hides, though far inferior to that of their dam, were given to different parties.

In the meanwhile, the men who had gone up to fetch down the cubs from the cave, gave such a glowing description of the merits of the latter, its beautiful view, perfectly warm shelter, and so forth, that almost all the parties, who were in a manner opposed to that of Herbert—for go were you will, one is sure to find an opposition, of some sort of description—all these bodies betook themselves off to inspect the cave, and declaring it far pleasanter to live up there secure from the winds, and keeping their eye on the possible approach of any ship, than on the less sheltered platform below, were resolute in adopting such place of retreat, accordingly.

"Well," said Herbert, "as you are your own masters, you can of course do as you please. But before you go, I warn you that it is by no means so safe a spot as this."

"And why not? I should like to know," demanded the British merchant; "what should make one place a bit more unsafe than the other?"

"I wish," said Herbert, "to address no argument to you, who appear to me to be infinitely too stupid to comprehend the most obvious proposition, and doubtless have spent your life, in such an entire absence from books, as to guard your mind against the least possible chance of being enlightened on any subject. Still, that you may not lead any other unfortunate person astray, I will take this opportunity of explaining that these icebergs are only small fragments of large mountains of the same material, that break up in the Arctic regions, on the departure of winter; and that when they do so the largest and heaviest end sinks in the sea, while the smallest and lightest floats above it. Thus constituted, these icebergs drift down into warmer latitudes; and where, of course, the water is not so cold as themselves, this causes the ice in the sea, as a natural consequence, to melt away, until at length, the portion below getting lighter than that which remains above the water, the whole mass, vast as it is, suddenly turns over, or topsy-turvy, as it is called; that which was above the sea sinks below, and that which was below rides uppermost, and thus it continues rolling over and over, until the whole mass is consumed."

"Pooh—fiddle-dee-dee!—a pretty old mother goose's story," cried the vulgar and ignorant pretender, who, accustomed to admit of no superiority except such as might be occasioned by pounds, shillings, and pence, and exceeding envious of the popularity and influence he saw Herbert enjoying, from a cause wholly independent of any such fourth-rate consideration, did not allow the little brains he had a fair opportunity of considering, whether that

which the other stated was in accordance with the laws of nature and therefore likely to be the case; or whether, in short, his own safety and that of all with him, might not be most promoted by taking the safe side, and attending to any warning of so serious a nature, even although the grounds on which it was based were not acknowledged by himself; more especially, when he must have known in his own mind, how profoundly ignorant he was upon the point in question; but this it always is, "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread," and of all things most difficult on earth to manage a fool ever is the worst.

Clever people may be headstrong, obstinate, and even vicious, but you may convince their understanding, and this once effected, the probability is great, that they will follow the path you desire; but with fools the work is always to do over again, and even when inclined for the right path, their own imbecility prevents their adopting it with any effect. In the present case, there were others but too well inclined to listen to anything that this ignorant custom could urge against the authority of Herbert; and never having heard nor read of the fact in question, these parties at once determined to treat with the utmost contempt those arguments which had only been used for purposes of their own safety.

"As to that doctrine of icebergs tilting over, there was some such absurdity once held, even among men of science;" replied the ignorant and presumptuous cardmaker; "but every person who knows anything at all, perfectly laughs at such a doctrine now; quite laughs at it. Oh, it really is too absurd, ha! ha! ha! in the year eighteen hundred and forty *wonn*, amid all the enlightenment that is supposed to characterize the nineteenth century, to hear such a doctrine gravely laid down, and by a Yankee too! by a gentleman too, who is one of the go-ahead nation. Ha! ha! ha! it is really too absurd."

And the hound pretended to laugh, as if he had never met with any joke at all like it, seeing, as every one did, how much Herbert felt nettled at the derisive mode of treating his proposition.

"As to this person," said our hero, "I shall not waste any observations in a quarter where they can't be understood, nor shall I think it at all necessary to renew the warning I now give to those who may be momentarily led away by the vulgar effrontery and pretence of a person as ignorant as he is cowardly and presumptuous. If any of you question the correctness of my assertions, my friend the quaker here is perfectly able to set you right, even if I should lead you astray——"

"Friends! friends!—it is but too true," said Broadbrim.

While St. John added contemptuously, "No man, who has ever opened a book on the subject, would ever presume to doubt it."

"At any rate, gentlemen," continued Herbert, "judge for yourselves. You must know very well, whether for the last twenty-four hours, you have, like me, felt the motion of the ice

increase excessively, and if so, you can draw your own conclusions from the fact; if you should be posted half way up the iceberg, when it tilts over, I cannot conceive, for my part, how anything can save you from being inevitably drowned. On the other hand, if you should happen to be low down on this little point, which juts out, you might then possess a chance of struggling back upon the ice, which you cannot possibly hope to do otherwise. It is an affair for your own consideration; I have given you timely notice—please yourselves.”

“Oh! fiddle! fudge! gammon!” said the elegant maker of cards, “one would think we were all taken to be fresh from the shell, to hear such nonsense propounded; and what’s the end of it all?—That we are just asked to stay still and perish, much in the same fashion on the one part of the ice as on the other. For my part, every one may do as he pleases; but I shall listen to no such humbug;” and off went the British merchant to inspect the cave in question, leaving those inclined to follow to do so at their leisure; an example which, unfortunately, many of them pursued; mistaking, as is too often the case in this world, the glitter of unabashed impudence for an evidence of sound ability.

“Well, gentlemen,” said Herbert, “it’s your look out and not mine; though I doubt not, when too late, you will alter your opinion as to the soundness of following that worthy man’s preaching.”

With one or two exceptions of the gentler sex, nearly all the other passengers accompanied the explorers to the cave; and not very sorry to have got rid of their society, which it may easily be supposed was little in accordance with the feelings of any of our friends, the latter now found themselves left to their own meditations.

But as soon as the other was gone, Mr. St. John turned to Herbert, and said,—

“I did not like to say anything that might add to the sorrows we were enduring, but I have several times felt the undulations you have mentioned, and in my own mind have no doubt that we are doomed soon to experience one of those dreadful overturns which those fools will not believe to be possible.”

“I have not the least doubt of it,” said Herbert; “from what the brigadier tells me as to the state in which he found the bear’s cave, the edges so worn, and so on, it’s quite clear that this end of the iceberg has been out of the water a considerable time, even if it has ever received its first turn below. Now, if that is the case, it cannot be long before the revolution takes place, and from the motions of this enormous mass, I think it to be even closer at hand than you seem to expect.”

“Very likely,” said the father; “and when that does take place, I suppose there is an end to all of us.”

"Why no, indeed, I hope not; I don't see, though we shall no doubt get a good ducking—I really cannot see, why we may not hope to scramble once more, on sound footing."

The father looked at Nautila, as Herbert gave utterance to these words, as much as to say, look at that frail creature, and ask yourself how far she is fitted to endure such a struggle!

"She shall be my care; I will answer for her getting back, if my own life is spared," exclaimed our hero.

The old man shook his head, and sighing deeply, replied, "I will not follow the example of those vulgar wretches, so far as to say, it might be better perhaps, that some sudden catastrophe should take us, rather than slow famine. On the contrary, God's will be done; but it is a trying choice of dreadful evils, at the best."

"Never mind, sir," said Herbert cheerfully. "Care won't help us, and the sun never shines more brightly than when darting from behind the darkest clouds. What's life but an aggregation of ills? It is all very well for the vulgar and ignorant to fret over this; the learned should be prepared to experience its truth, and fight the hard battle accordingly. In this case, for instance, why should we fret about the turning over of the ice? Let us gaze rather on the brigadier's flag of victory, and hope it may attract the attention of some passing sail. We owe him great thanks for his timely supply, which enables us to enjoy our own store in peace and quietness; and as he was very much cast down, by the steamer running ashore in his watch, perhaps you will take the very first opportunity that occurs, of thanking him for his gallant capture of the bear."

"I will," said the old man; "it was as you observe a gallant thing to do, and we are all much indebted to him; and though misery, such as ours, shows in its worst light the selfishness of our race, it also sets out in brilliant contrast—wherever they may happen to exist—the inestimable qualities of generosity and courage. And not only to the brigadier are my thanks due, Mr. Herbert, but also very greatly to yourself; and as an opportunity now occurs, which death, perhaps, may shortly snatch me from ever enjoying again, let me now confer on you a small token of my regard, and a proof that I have not been an unpleased spectator of much of your conduct since we embarked."

As the old gentleman said this, he drew from his hand his glove, an action which Herbert had not seen him perform, since his embarkation, never having seen him at the dinner-table, and Mr. St. John being singularly remarkable for never wearing his hands bare except when at meals.

Taking from his finger an enormous emerald, without speck or blemish, "I fear," he added, "its intrinsic value may never prove of much worth to you, under the threatening circumstances that surround us. But should I live to reach England, I shall be too

glad to redeem it from you, at any price, within forty thousand pounds. It has been in the family many years, and there is no worldly chattel I possess, that has half the value in my estimation."

"Well, but sir, if that is the case——"

"It is the very reason," said St. John, interrupting him, "why I should select it for a present. Follow my example in that, Mr. Herbert. Give but rarely, unless your means can afford it; but always let your presents be worthy of the donor. That ring was once the pride, and afterwards the present, of a monarch of England. Now I fear it must share the fate of the Doge's ring, and shortly wed the sea. But here comes the brigadier, and having paid my previous debt of thanks to you, I shall now follow your advice and attend to my obligations to him."

CHAPTER LXXV.

" 'Twas midnight dark,
The seaman's bark,
Swift o'er the waters bore him,
When thro' the night
He spied a light
Shoot o'er the wave before him."

T. MOORE.

THE fourth morning had now nearly arrived. The sun, though it had not yet risen, already gave faint indications of its situation in the sky by those first pale streaks that are the fore-runners of his chariot. Up to this period, although two or three distant sails had been seen on the horizon, none had yet approached sufficiently near to observe the brigadier's flag upon the iceberg. Hour after hour the observant party, who had remained below, had plainly detected the increase of that oscillatory motion, which they were certain, in their own minds, preceded the falling over of their hope and only place of refuge, the stately, but treacherous isle of ice, which appeared likely, with every passing moment, to hurl them from its inhospitable bosom into the world of waters.

Again and again Herbert had given to Nautila the fullest instructions as to how she was to endeavour to preserve life under the tremendous struggle to which it would shortly be exposed; and with a coolness that even surprised himself, she received all his instructions without the least dismay, and prepared to fulfil them to the letter.

One of the mackintosh pillows Herbert had slung round her body, and the other she had insisted on giving to the fair lady-love of the brigadier. Each was to seize her camp-stool when the awful moment arrived. The brigadier was, of course, to look to the safety of his damsel, and Herbert was to direct his attention to replace Nautila once more upon the berg so soon as the vast mass should present to the air those fresh surfaces which, of course, were now buried in water.

A doubt also here presented itself as to whether the edges, which would speedily rise above the surface, would be sufficiently low to allow of their being ascended; since it was far from improbable that the new mass, on appearing above the sea, might

be so precipitous, on all sides, as to defy any amount of skill or courage in gaining it unassisted from the waters.

It was a fearful struggle for existence that they were thus about to commence anew. But having long contemplated the extremity, it was idle to think of quailing before that which was inevitable.

Previous to those faint streaks of light, which we have mentioned, both Herbert and the brigadier had very kindly striven to arouse to a sense of their impending danger those of their late shipmates who had taken possession of the cave. But whether they were unable to make their voices heard so far aloft, or whether the latter were determined to treat their summons with contempt—or were sleeping too soundly to be aroused by them—or whether even, as was not impossible, they might have got so thoroughly benumbed by the cold, as to have fallen into that lethargic stupor so often fatal in severe latitudes, it was impossible for our friends to tell. No one answered to their summons, nor did they dare to leave their own post of comparative security in order to ascend to that of the cave above. The path was both dangerous and difficult, and under no circumstances capable of being accomplished in less than half an hour; and by that time every soul of them might be whelmed many fathoms beneath the sea.

Here then was the very danger of which Herbert had foretold them. And, as they had not thought fit to avail themselves of his kind counsel, all parties below agreed that it would be too monstrous to compromise their own safety by searching out what had become of beings too negligent, or too willful, to take care of themselves.

While this debate was passing, and the mighty mass on which they stood refracted back in all its splendour every particle of the morning light, swaying backwards and forwards to the gentle swell of the sea, and the fresh morning air, with a force that seemed every moment about to conclude the catastrophe they dreaded, Herbert, who was gazing upon the liquid watery expanse before them, less in the hope of espying any succour than from that intuitive sort of custom which becomes second nature in the lives of all who follow their calling on the deep, beheld just one little dot—it could scarcely be called a speck—of deep shadow—in the very path betwixt him and the point where the sun was about to rise.

“Broadbrim,” said our hero, “your eyes are the best of the party’s; come here, look across the sea in the direction of the sun, and tell me if you see anything.”

The calm sectarian drew near, and putting up his hand to shade his orbs of vision, replied: “Verily, friend, I do see something, if aught so small can be called anything. It is very black, and as far as I can judge from this distance, very shapeless. But it draweth nigh very rapidly.”

The question next arose what this could be. At first all conjectures were idle, from the distance of the object and the smallness of its size. Presently, when it grew nearer, some pronounced it to be a porpoise—others a dead whale—others a piece of timber; but all agreed, be it what it might, it would soon be close at hand and gratify the curiosity of all parties, since the iceberg, which floated towards it with great rapidity, went four knots an hour to leeward for one of that dark object they had all discerned.

This was owing to the enormous mass presented to the wind by the ice, which drifted along rather above the rate of four miles an hour. And whatever might prove to be the nature of that towards which they were now floating, all declared their determination of endeavouring to make a capture.

"By this and by that, if it's a wreck," said the brigadier, "it will do to light us a fire, and I'll stand a chance of cooking one of my precious cubs yet."

"If it is a dead porpoise," said Herbert, "it will be a nice little delicacy to add to the general stock of those gentlemen in the cave above."

"I hope," said Nautila, "it may prove to be a whale asleep. I never have seen one of those creatures yet, and I always have had a great desire to do so. What do you say, brigadier, do you think it's a whale asleep? I do."

"Why," said the gallant soldier, "if you do, madam, of course I do, though I confess it appears to me more like a piece of good stout wreck."

"Ha, it's the old story," said Mr. St. John; "whatever our wishes desire, that our fancy is ready to prompt, however outrageous or improbable. For my part, I think you are all wrong; I think it's a boat."

"Oh! a boat," cried all parties laughing, "impossible it could be a boat; it has not the least appearance of a boat."

"Oh no!" said the brigadier; "you must guess again this time; at any rate, it will never prove to be a boat, on this side creation."

"Well, friends, ye cannot all be right, that is quite clear," said Broadbrim; "and whether it turns out to be a boat or not, of this I am certain, whether sleeping whale, porpoise, boat, or wreck, my old eyes clearly detect some human figure lying asleep on the top of it."

"Hah! well! that is the most absurd idea of all," cried every one at once. "Whoever turns out to be right, you must be wrong, Broadbrim, at any rate."

"We shall see, friend, we shall see; my eyes do not often deceive me."

"Faith, then, they have played you a great trick this time, Broadbrim."

"I doubt it, friend, I doubt it. But it is idle to dispute. In a

few minutes, we shall all behold what it really is. The sun riseth rapidly behind it; and now, thou unbelieving warrior, dost thou not indubitably perceive a human form lying, as if asleep, along the top of?"

"Well, by my honour, it's very strange; I confess I do see something more than I at first believed of that shape. Yet, how can it be?"

"It is a human figure," said St. John; "and what's more, I see I'm quite right in my supposition that it was a boat, for now I can plainly detect the stem sticking up."

"Ay, sir, and not only a boat is it; but plain as I ever saw anything, there floats near it some other object which seems just protruding from the water, farther off indeed than the other, and more indistinct."

Various conjectures of all kinds were now hazarded upon the appearance, rapidly growing into certainty, that the matter approaching was a boat, if not two. And when at length the iceberg had drifted fairly down upon it, Broadbrim, who kept his eye full upon the marvel, started back several paces declaring,—

"Long as I have lived, friends, a more strange marvel than this never met my eyes. Yonder boat approaching is none other than that in which the mutineers sought to rob thee, friend St. John, of thy wealth, and now it returns to thee unharmed—undiminished, while they who sought to gain a spoil have become themselves the prey. There lies certainly the bark, which we saw upset, and hither rides in safety the smaller boat, which thy skill, friend Herbert, seems to have preserved amid the raging tempest."

"What, then, is that lying asleep upon it?"

"I cannot yet exactly see, friend," said the quaker. "It has a strange appearance, wondrously like the human form; though one hardly knows how to reconcile that fact with the upset the others have evidently sustained. But in a few moments it will be nearer, and then, peradventure, we shall be able to discover what it all means.—Yes!—yes!—here she draws nearer—Merciful Father, it is a mere skeleton! Life is extinct!—No, it cannot be.—And yet it is!"

"Who!" exclaimed all with one voice.

"Ebenezer Wire! That miserable worshipper of wealth," exclaimed Broadbrim.

"Ay," interrupted the brigadier, "it is, by Heaven; it's old Ebenezer, come back among us again."

In a few minutes more the boat drifted so close, that by wading out a little upon one of the points of ice, Herbert was enabled to haul this long disputed object close on board, and turning over the dead man, so that his face might become visible, there in truth was seen the worn and pinched features of the miser, bearing every appearance of having died in intense agony and starvation.

For some moments every one present appeared too shocked to

give utterance to those feelings which this sight naturally called forth.

They then agreed at once to commit to the deep the festering body of the baffled Ebenezer, who appeared only to have sought his own destruction, as every one imagined he would, in the absurd pursuit of a little wealth, which would only have increased a hoard already more than sufficient.

As far as could be guessed from appearances, though it amounted to a mere conjecture after all, Ebenezer must, as soon as the large cutter became upset, have scrambled off to the small one, and there, most probably by the painter and dint of great exertion, succeeded in getting upon the top of the tarpaulin, which covered his darling gold: those who beheld his corpse in the situation where it was found, and knew the man, could well imagine what intense delight he must have felt, even amid all the dangers of the scene, in thinking that every one was drowned, who could by any possibility claim a share in any part of the treasure.

And this was, in all probability, the case, as there existed not the slightest trace of any other parties having, like himself, survived the first fatal accident only to feel more keenly that death by starvation which appeared to have afterwards overtaken him; and then in those last pangs, when he found that nothing could suffice to secure existence and those hoards, for which alone he valued it, how trebly keen must have become his pangs!

On all these points, however, little time was given for our friends to debate; while they were yet busy in sinking Ebenezer's body, the whole mass of the iceberg gave such a reel to leeward, that a shriek arose from the little candlestick-maker, under the full impression that everything was over.

"You must be quick, my dear boy, with your funeral service, unless you wish to entomb us all," said the brigadier, as the frozen pile gradually regained its perpendicular. "Don't be particular about the old scarecrow; you'll never make him handsome, though you wake the old vagabond from now till midsummer; and what is the use of stuffing his pockets full of ice? Won't that be just as likely to float as Ebenezer? Just throw him overboard, and let him take his chance; surely our friends here are worth fifty dead usurers; and this ice is rocking so, it won't hold up much longer, I can assure you. Haul up the large cutter, and let us see if we can bale any of the water out, enough at least for the ladies to sit in. I'll come and assist you;" and scrambling over the thwarts of the boat, the brigadier commenced baling away with his hat.

Under the vigorous exertions of the major, assisted by one or two other hands, a visible decrease soon appeared in the water that had before filled the cutter. Thus cheered, the exertions of our friends were redoubled, until a check of most material import was given to them.

"Make haste, friends, make haste," said the Quaker, "for if nothing worse happens to us, the rocking of this slippery island will presently throw us from its glassy surface into the sea; a consummation by no means to be wished. I think I had better come and add one to the balers also. Friend Herbert, friend St. John, the ice is going, I feel it going, make haste, make haste."

"Hallo, brigadier, the quaker is right; look up; here it comes. You help your damsel on board, and I'll look after Nautila. Quick, for your life, Symonds!" and jumping from the seat on which he sat, Herbert had great difficulty in scrambling along the slippery ice, that now began to turn over.

"I'm coming to you, I'm coming," cried Nautila, still retaining presence of mind amid the impending danger to snatch up the carpet-bag and clothing, to which so much of her comfort had been owing, and hurry with them towards her lover, agitated with alarm for her safety amid a scene of dreadful grandeur.

For once, curiosity proved a useful auxiliary: the little candle-stick-maker, and all the other ladies, who had not been carried by their respective lords to the dangerous comfort of the cave, got easily on board the large cutter, out of which the exertions of Herbert and the brigadier had found time to get just enough water baled to enable the boat to float, and no more.

However, at a moment like the present all parties were too glad to have the least chance of escaping from the danger that awaited them, to hesitate in plunging boldly into a boat half filled with salt water; and even this they had considerable difficulty in accomplishing.

As the vast pile slowly surged over, it of course quickened in its descent, and the dreadful crashing noise it made, as one block of ice after another broke with its own weight, and fell thundering on the portion next immediately beneath it, was most stunning; the platform on which they had rested for the last few days, now altered its position so completely, that Herbert, who had half carried Nautila along it, was obliged to steady himself by catching at the support of the other ledges on his right hand.

Expecting every instant to be crushed to pieces, by the fall of some of those tremendous masses, whose thunder over head seemed to be momentarily increasing, with considerable apprehension our hero looked up to see whether he was not now immediately under the half-fallen pinnacle which we have so often quoted. It was some relief to find that this was not so, but that it hung in a direction more towards the boat.

On gaining the last point of the ice, the latter had unfortunately floated out of reach, and the parties in it were so busy stowing themselves away, they did not perceive his approach with Nautila.

"Symonds! my dear Symonds!" cried our hero, "shove the

boat this way, or we shall be knocked on the head after all. Make haste, if you have any wish to save us. Where are the oars?"

"Oh, then, as sure as Old Nick, the vagabonds have lost every one of them. Parson, man!—paddle the boat with your hands to the ice; here is Herbert wanting to get on board, and can't."

"We must not take her back to the ice, major, or we shall get struck ourselves," said the parson.

"Suppose we do, what of that," returned the brigadier. But the other seemed to have a considerable notion that it was anything but what he wanted. At last he lent his aid; Broadbrim, seeing what was going on, did the same, and the boat gradually approached the ice.

"Here, my boy, tip me your daddle," cried the generous brigadier, holding out his drenched hat, with which he had been baling. Herbert made an effort to catch it, but the ice was so inverted that his utmost effort was wholly unavailing. Fall he must; all he could accomplish was, to choose which way he should fall, so as most to protect his charge. Allowing himself, therefore, to fall backward, his shoulders came with full violence against the gunnel of the boat, Nautila in a manner falling on him, and her father tottering after. The severity of the blow, depriving him of speech, he lay gasping on the gunnel, endeavouring to draw Nautila in, till the brigadier, seizing the boat, drew them on board.

"Quick, quick, old gentleman," the major cried; "tumble in, and shoot the boat off with your heel, or the ice will catch us as it goes down, and pitch us all to the devil, to begin the battle over again. Here it comes! here it comes! now kick away! kick for your life, man!" the brigadier added, as he saw the rude edges of the ice about to steep below the water even the last hope he entertained.

But the blow the father had received, as well as Herbert, rendered it much more easy to give these instructions than to follow them. Seeing how the case stood, the brigadier gallantly jumped on the berg himself, and seizing the boat by its head, boldly launched it out by the stern into the sea, and then swam after it. Cold as this operation seemed, it was successful; with rapid inclination, the vast pile above them now gained the utmost angle which it could maintain, and then plunging downwards with a frightful noise and terrific foam, dashed deep into the sea; some of its blocks actually falling so close to the frail bark as almost to touch it; though luckily, however, none chanced actually to strike it.

As the gorgeous mass went down, glittering like so much mingled gold and silver and crystal heaped together, something like a human cry struck the ears of more than one of the party:

but as all their efforts to detect amid the spray-sparkling pyramid, either the cave or its inhabitants utterly failed, this might have been a mere fancy.

When the cloud of foam which the falling island threw up towards heaven had a little dissipated, which it rapidly did, they beheld a spectacle scarcely less imposing and still more resplendent and magnificent than the fall of the old iceberg, in the gradual appearing of the new, if we may give it such a term.

A large struggling white mountain was first seen, as if exerting itself to rise through the dark blue waves that kept it down; slowly the water dripped from one point after another, as each became apparent to view, and then, as if the question was suddenly determined, away it sprang like an emancipated world towards the blue ether above, catching like aameleon the cerulean tints of heaven, and spangled in every direction with inconceivable brilliancy.

Points innumerable now caught the sun's rays on every side, and though this new object of admiration was wanting in some of the bulky and massive proportions of that which it had supplanted, it was evidently still more lofty and elegant.

At last, when by this violent effort it had gained its most perpendicular position, it rocked to and fro some seconds, almost as if it were about to return to its former imprisonment in the waves beneath, or, as the brigadier insisted, it was rejoicing in the pride of the glorious morning.

In these violent oscillations, one of its large spires snapped suddenly off, and fell dashing into the deep blue tide below.

"Look at that," said the brigadier; "that's just the way, depend on it, that the other long straight finger-post, that is now gone down, got broke away. By the Lord Harry, till this last voyage, I always used to think that a general review and troops going into action were the grandest sights in nature! But I begin to suspect now, that a man may be deceived, even in so plain a proposition; and that's what I shouldn't have admitted readily."

"Thee hast certainly seen a magnificent sight, this day, friend," said the quaker.

"Why, yes, Broadbrim, I have; and now I only want to see another, and I am satisfied."

"And what is that, friend?"

"A sirloin of beef and a magnum of port."

"What, wilt thou for ever be hankering after the meat that perisheth? At this time I grant that thy desires are but natural, and such as I too could find it in my heart to commend, would it assist us. But as thinking of hot joints only makes cold starvation more miserable, suppose, friend Symonds, we proceed to bale out the boat."

"Well, I think it a very reasonable proposition; and that done

I will see if I can pick up upon the waters, the floating carcass of my remaining young cub."

"My dear brigadier," said the parson, "I have that already. Nobody seemed to pay attention to him; but considering his gratitude to be quite as strong as that of the British merchant, I took the liberty of bringing him on board."

"Perfectly right, my dear fellow, perfectly right; you are made to be a pillar of the church. I foresee the distant honours at which you will arrive. Now doff your hat, and help me to bale out the barky."

CHAPTER LXXVI.

"Zounds, sir; do you imagine you are to come into my house, and, like the great Turk, throw the handkerchief to whomsoever you please?"—*Clandestine Marriage.*

IN speedy compliance with the reasonable request of the major, Wynn Powell doffed his golgotha, and casting a tender look upon it, thus apostrophized the same, hoping that others felt the force of his apostrophe.

"Oh, battered remnant of beaver and New York! Sad remembrancer of a thousand fond recollections of civilization and refinement! who shall repair thy damaged front? who shall again restore to thy exhausted frame that nap for which thy master feels a longing even greater than thy own? Here, let me offer the last sad protection it is in my power to bestow!" and taking from his neck what had once been a black silk handkerchief, he tenderly wrapped and fastened it round his castor, to the great amusement of his companions, and then plunging it into the water that filled the boat; but at the same time supporting the crown, under the heavy weight, he proceeded in this manner to bale away.

The example thus set was immediately followed by all hands. Broadbrim, Mr. St. John, the brigadier, and Herbert, all worked cheerfully at the same employment, allowing their bark to rest the while, at the foot of the iceberg, in hopes that they might yet be fortunate enough to pick up one or two of their late companions, if any of these should prove to have escaped from the terrific danger to which they had been exposed; and for this purpose,

from time to time, they suspended their exertions to listen for any cries that might possibly reach them. None, however, were heard, nor anything like a human being seen; and at last, the boat being quite dry, they began to make preparations for their departure.

Their first task was to examine carefully their means of future existence, and this ascertained, to proportion them to their wants accordingly. They next had to refit, in as perfect a manner as possible, the means they yet possessed, of propelling across the heavy seas the two boats on which all their worldly prospects were embarked; and here Mr. St. John argued most stringently for the throwing overboard of the whole of the treasure, and dividing the party into the two boats, arguing that the wretched coin had already brought misery enough to all of them, and he wished to see no more of it: that the comfort of the party would be much increased by this suggestion, and the chance that now existed of any danger, from towing so heavy a burden, at once and for ever removed.

To this, however, the others, with great good feeling, would not listen. At least, when we say the others, we confine our description exclusively to Wynn Powell, Broadbrim, and the brigadier. Herbert said nothing, thinking, in all probability, that the position in which he stood with relation to *Nautila* might give an air of delicacy to any opposition he might offer to the proposal of Mr. St. John, as to the disposition of his own treasure. The others saw this, and the observation only induced them to be still more urgent in insisting that the treasure should be carried in safety, looking, in truth, upon Mr. Herbert as a little cracked on this point, and thinking it hard that his child, who had no voice in the matter, should be called upon to be so heavy a sufferer for so little purpose. Finally the arguments of the majority prevailed. The tow-rope was examined, to see that it still remained strong and perfect; and this being satisfactorily ascertained, as well as the tarpaulin covering found to be still perfect, one of the blankets that had hitherto wrapped *Nautila's* feet was attached to an oar that they had found in the bottom of the boat, after it was baled out, and hoisted, by way of lug-sail, upon the mizen mast; and a final survey having been made of the iceberg, to see that no living creature remained on it, the lug was hoisted, and before a gentle and steady gale the shipwrecked adventurers now bore away.

It may easily be supposed the progress of our friends was not very rapid, under all the disadvantages beneath which they had to struggle; but quite content to renew, in some sort, the least hope of returning to their homes, poor as the speed of their bark proved, it seemed to the passengers and crew to realize all the perfection that any one could possibly desire; however, other matters now claimed their attention. The provisions were next examined, and duly noted in Herbert's memorandum-book, as follows:—

One bear's cub, dead; one half-cask of salt pork: two barrels

of soaked biscuit ; three breakers of water, not very fresh ; one cask of rum.

These and various other provisions had been carefully stowed by the mutineers, when they quitted the steamer with the treasure ; and though at that period little attention had been paid to the articles with which they thought fit to equip their ill-fated expedition, nothing could possibly have proved more seasonable than a discovery of the store we have mentioned, lashed under the thwarts of the cutter forward, and partly brought to light by the baling of the boat, as the water sank down to the bottom.

A careful division having been made of these different stores, Herbert was enabled to inform his crew that they need fear nothing like starvation for the next two months, long before which he sincerely trusted either to fall in with some friendly vessel, or to make some point of land, where they might find secure shelter and fresh food. Our hero then also intimated his intention of continuing to sail as near as possible due south ; not with any prospect of thereby falling in with any particular land, because, as he was bound to confess, he remained in utter ignorance of any position they might happen to occupy, and therefore to steer for any given point in particular, without knowing the spot from which his course must be taken, was an absurdity on the face of it.

One consolation, at any rate, he felt and duly expressed : whatever might be his difficulties as a commander, no man was ever blessed with a more docile crew ; and acknowledging their readiness to be guided by him in every point of view, they agreed rigidly to observe the economy, which he stated to be so necessary in the use of their provisions, and these were forthwith, for the first time, served out to all hands on board.

For the first few days the weather continued fine and moderate, after which, the wind shifting round direct into the north-west, came on to blow very sharply ; but this, after the determination which Herbert had formed of sailing as nearly south as possible, merely amounted to a strong but fair breeze of which our hero was not slow to profit, and running directly before it, with nothing but the position of the sun by day, and observations of the stars by night to guide him, trusted the fate of himself and companions, to that kind Providence which had hitherto protected them in so eminent a degree.

In this manner they contrived to run before the gale, suffering, comparatively speaking, little or no annoyance when placed beside that which they had had to undergo on the ice.

The first act of Herbert's leisure had been to arrange the steerage of the boat by means of a rude yoke and a pair of yoke lines, which he contrived to lead forward into the midships, so that any party sitting there might steer her.

Further aft our hero erected, for the use of the ladies, a perfect

screen, formed of a second blanket, behind which they might sleep in comfort and quiet at night, and enjoy a greater degree of warmth and privacy by day, free from the observation of their fellow-passengers. This was a piece of attention for which they all felt very grateful, and availed themselves of most eagerly.

The gold repeater of Mr. St. John was the only chronometer which had not yet had the benefit of a perfect plunge in salt water. Neither danger, nor threatening of danger, had sufficed to make him forget for a moment that duty of winding up its daily span of life, in which attention, for many years, he had accustomed himself to be almost as punctual as the sun. By this horologe, then, the meals of the party were regulated; and in firm reliance upon heaven, our friends continued to sail on, enduring their privations with a cheerfulness and good humour that placed humanity in as favourable a point of view as the scenes on board the steamer had tended to disgrace it.

Still, however, no friendly sail, no chance-directed bark could be seen from their low position on the wave. Once or twice, something like a bird's wing on the horizon had called forth their hopes, but it was only to plunge them still more deeply in despair.

At last, one morning, Broadbrim aroused Herbert by no unpleasing summons. "Friend! friend!" said the quaker, shaking the drowsy sleeper, "cast off thy slumbers, and arouse thee quickly. My old eyes behold the land once more."

"Land!" cried Herbert, springing from the bottom of the boat, where his head had been pillowed by the broad shoulder of the brigadier, "Heaven grant it may be land. Where is it?"

"Yonder," replied Broadbrim, pointing directly to leeward, over the bow of the cutter, as it glanced swiftly over one dark-blue mass of water after another, and the object in question now rose into sight above the horizon, and now sunk beyond all view.

Herbert strained his eyes as the boat rose the next time, but seemingly in vain; for, turning to the quaker, he replied, "Why, Father Broadbrim, where is the land thou descriest? I confess, I see nothing but a fog-bank."

"And thy fog-bank is my land, friend Herbert."

"I wish I could think so," said the latter, gazing at the spot as if anxious to cheat himself into a belief of that which he so ardently desired; "but I fear the only land it is likely to turn out, is No-Man's-Land. Mortal foot would seek in vain for any solid support yonder."

"We shall see, friend—we shall see," said Broadbrim; "albeit, I like not wagers, I could wish that some desiderated point were as assuredly attainable to my wishes as that yon dim, misty mass, peaked and irregular as thou seest it is, will prove some portion of the solid earth."

Herbert still shook his head, as he examined again and again the appearance in question, without being able to come to any

other conclusion than that it was nothing more than a mere collection of vapour, which could not fail to be dispersed by the heat of the sun's rays, as soon as these should attain anything like power.

The discussion, in the meanwhile, had speedily roused the other sleepers, and bright and longing eyes enough were now fixed on the disputed spot to have pierced any veil that human vision might overcome. Still, the sun continued to rise, and still, instead of melting away, as Herbert had prognosticated, the distant outline grew more and more distinct. A thousand and one conjectures were hazarded, not only as to whether the matter of dispute were really the long-prayed-for land—for that the eager majority of all seemed to maintain that it was—but even as to the locality of the spot they were approaching.

At length, when Herbert perceived that both the rising of the sun and the approach of themselves did not dissipate his hopes, he began to trust that, in his over-caution, he might yet, to his great joy, find himself mistaken.

At this point, Broadbrim, who had been screwing his hand into a focus for the last few minutes, suddenly desisted from his operations, and turning to the others, exclaimed very gravely: "Where we may be, at this present, sailing to, my friends, it is impossible to say; but one piece of information I can give you, and that is, let yonder land be what it will, I see very plainly, on one part of it, a group of those vegetable productions in nature which men term palm-trees."

Some little debate followed this declaration, the others who were looking on, not being yet able to distinguish these signs of tropical life, which Broadbrim's peculiar power of vision had enabled him to detect. One by one, however, the listeners on all sides admitted the assertion to be well founded; while Wynn Powell, more enthusiastic than the rest, no sooner satisfied his orbs that they were right in this particular, than jumping up in the middle of the boat, he gave three cheers in honour of the event that was so delighting to all on board—an act in which they all joined with the utmost gratitude and joy.

CHAPTER LXXVII.

" 'Twas a lone island of the Cyclades."

" And welcome every perfumed air,
That wakes and wafts each odour there."

BYRON.

"GIVE me your fist, my darling jewel," cried the brigadier, as the cheering subsided, and turning to Herbert, who sat near him. "At last, please Heaven, we'll put our foot upon something solid, that shall neither rock with the sea, nor melt with the sun. And oh, if there's a stick upon the island, isn't it ourselves that will build the natest cabin out of Ireland? By this and by that, Parson Powell, if it isn't yourself that's got your turn for duty come round at last, anyhow!—and no fear about the fees either, jewel, with seventy-six thousand pounds in gold towing astern of us. And isn't it just such customers as ourselves that the Church is best pleased to see of a bright morning; isn't it so, parson?"

"Come, don't abuse the Church, brigadier; or, by my honour, I won't tie you up, after all your castle-building."

"Forbear, forbear, friend Symonds, thy indecorous discourse; it puts the maidens to the blush," said Broadbrim, who observed a very perceptible frown gathering on the brow of Mr. St. John. "Be not too hasty, friend, in reckoning thy chickens before they are hatched, to use a homely proverb, the strength of which I have seen too often proved not to treat with great respect. And as far as I can see, yonder land must be exceeding lofty, and not over extensive, either. Suppose, on our arrival, we should be unable to gain access to it;—how then?"

"Were it as lofty as the moon, Broadbrim—what says the song?—love will find out the way."

"Well, well, we shall see; but I, for one, would rather decline the attempt, friend Symonds, if the land bear any such character as thou describest; and, in the meanwhile, put a bridle on that unruly tongue of thine, and make up thy mind for disappointment, for then the reverse will give thee the greater pleasure."

Bantering one another in this manner, the gale bore steadily onward the storm-tossed bark, and the precious freight she carried, until at length, shortly before the hour of noon, our

friends found themselves within half an hour's run of the land they had descried. As Broadbrim had prognosticated, it proved, at least upon the side on which our friends approached it, to be steepness and inaccessibility itself.

"Well," said Herbert, who sat at the helm, "this is as pretty a kind of wall as I think I have seen for some time. There is no fear of anything here but a sunken rock, and that is not very likely; and as we have a good slanting breeze, I propose that we stand close in. What say you, friends?"

"Stand in," quoth the brigadier, "I wouldn't be backward in doing that. For my part, I only wish we stood on it. What should prevent our standing in?"

"Why, generally, my dear friend, it's of very little use approaching an iron-bound coast like this, unless you see some favourable landing-place. But though we've run round two miles of it, we might as well think of landing from a three-decker on Beechy Head."

"Oh, pooh, man, don't be down-hearted at a trifle or two, after having lived on a world of our own, that turned topsy-turvy in the water with us two or three times every half-hour. You only run in, we'll be sure to find a landing-place, somewhere."

"Friend Herbert, take, with a considerable grain of salt, that rash young man's advice," said Broadbrim, quietly laying his hand on Herbert's arm, "and keep well before your eyes the running of the steamer upon the ice. I cannot help thinking, for my part, that we should be unwise to approach the shore nearer than we are."

"That is, you mean unless we see a landing-place?"

"Precisely so. It would be better far, even to spend another night upon the sea, and so land in safety, than, by an ill-advised haste, to strike on some sunken reef, and lose our boats, which on some future day may prove the only means in our power of getting back to the lost world. Yes, yes, friend Herbert, depend upon it, that will be the wisest plan. Was anything to happen to our boat off this land, I fear that all the perils we have come through would give me hope to look for another escape; and, as to the time of our arriving on shore, it matters not whether that is to-night or to-morrow morning, since, of this we may be certain, we shall not get, upon the first of our landing, whatever we may do afterwards, any better resting-place for the night, than we have already in this boat."

"Well, do you hear, brigadier: the general voice is against you?"

"Oh, of course, I'm wrong! Of course, I'm wrong! Say it was me, by all means! I never do right, nor advise anything right, even by accident!"

"Well, never mind, brigadier; in order that you may, for once, have some ground for saying that you have done the correct thing,

perhaps you'll go forward, and look out that we do not run upon any sunken rock or reef."

"Nay, nay, friend Symonds, pray spare thyself the trouble. I would much rather prefer that thou shouldst remain seated by the side of friend Anna Maria. My eyes are old, but as they seem to be among the sharpest of the company, I myself will go forward, as sentinel of the prow; and if you have not so young a look-out as yourself, you will at least have one that is thinking of that on which he is occupied."

"I tell you what it is, Broadbrim, you will never rest, I see that plainly, until I have to call you out."

"And then, friend, thou wilt assuredly find that the more thou callest, the more I won't come; so, take warning, and do not attempt to labour in vain. Now, friend Herbert, steer as near as thou thinkest prudent; thou mayest rely on my giving thee timely notice."

Our hero, though he did not choose to say so much, was quite as well pleased to see Broadbrim at his post, as he would to have seen the brigadier pretending to occupy that station, and yet directing the whole of his conversation, and half his looks, to Anna Maria, which would, infallibly, have been the case.

But still, though promontory opened after promontory, the cliffs reared their heads as high as ever, often mounting to four hundred feet, but in no one point showing anything at all like the slightest landing-place. Where the bending form of the shore allowed it, our friends could detect traces of very profuse vegetation on the summit of the tremendous walls of rock that guarded the island on every side, while there appeared not the least possibility of ascending them, and considerable disappointment was already beginning to exhibit itself in the countenance of Herbert, as well as in the expressions that escaped him.

After proceeding in this way for about five miles, for such was the rate at which their boat was going, a large, lofty, dark patch presented itself.

"There, Herbert, that must be a landing-place; do run in, and try it," said the brigadier, pointing to the spot to which he alluded.

"Friend, friend, art thee mad?" interposed Broadbrim. "It is nothing but a cave."

"Well," said Symonds, "what would ye have, a palace? Isn't a cave good enough for you, after dancing about in this way over the wide ocean; for my part, I'd be glad enough to take half an hour's jump within the dirtiest cave that ever called itself dry land."

"Provided, friend Symonds, it didn't contain a 'poor gentleman' in a brown coat."

"Oh, d—n that brown coat story, Quaker Broadbrim; I suppose I shall never hear the last of that. And so, you won't run into

the cave, eh? Well, have it as you will; for my part, I think I'm got into the Flying Dutchman, and that we are to go on, sail, sail, sail, for everlasting."

Here, some profound remark from Anna Maria called off the brigadier's attention once more, and the boat still proceeded in its course.

In point of wild, romantic, savage beauty, nothing could exceed that which they now beheld beside them, to leeward; but, when another hour succeeded, and still no break appeared in the high and rocky rampart, our friends began to wish that their newly-found island was something less beautiful, and a little more useful.

Not to weary the reader by idle detail, four o'clock had nearly arrived, when, at the same rate of nearly five miles an hour, the boat had continued to move on, tacking occasionally, when the heading of the wind required it, and still our friends had been as unsuccessful in their search as ever.

Thoroughly tired out with baffled expectation, the brigadier had sunk fast asleep, half seated and half prostrate in the bottom of the boat, his head pillowed against fair Anna Maria, and suddenly waking up, what should he see before him, away on the lee bow, again, but the same dark patch of a cave that he had observed before.

Starting on his legs, he exclaimed—"By the Lord of Innisfail, Herbert, I'm not joking; that is a landing-place, depend on it. I saw daylight through that cavern there. Stay! No, now it's gone."

"Daylight," said Herbert, rising from the helm, which he resigned to Nautila, and endeavouring to place himself in the position in which the brigadier first stood: "I see no daylight. Depend on it, it must be your own fancy."

"Fancy, man alive; why, to hear you talk, one would think there was some whiskey on board, when one hasn't seen anything that might pretend to be the ghost of a drop. No, it was sober, serious earnestness as ever grew out of pump water. Here, Broadbrim, you have, as you say, the sharpest eyes of the whole lot, try what you can make of it."

"I have been trying, friend Symonds, ever since thee hast spoken, and I can see no more of daylight in yon murky cave, than I can see the bottom of the sea. Thou must have been thinking of the bright eyes of the maiden behind thee."

"Well," said the brigadier, "I must be the most unfortunate devil going, and no mistake. But, Herbert, will you just do me a particular favour?"

"Yes, if I can. What is it?"

"Just stand in towards the spot itself. Heaven surely never made an island like this, some four or five miles broad, and as round as a sugar loaf, without so much as a single footstep for

anything to get on it, but the birds of the air. Oh, by this and by that, it's a downright shame to believe it."

"Well, but my dear fellow, we——"

"Ay, ay, I know what you are going to say, that we have sailed all round it; and that's the very thing that makes my position. You can't find any ordinary landing-place, so, depend on it, there's some extraordinary one. At any rate, humour me this once; the sea is as calm as you could wish it, and this is rather the lower side of the island, and if I help Broadbrim to look out for rocks, we can't get into any great danger, without our having time to warn you of it."

In answer to this application of the brigadier's, a great many objections were urged; one and all contended that it was utterly impossible that he could be right in his supposition of having seen daylight through the cavern; as that would argue, that it ran through the island to the other side, or had some most strange and singular connection with the interior; and at last, as it appeared not much worse to approach and inspect the place, than to remain cruising and baffled, and wandering round it through the rest of the night, the boat's head was finally directed to the spot in question, while Symonds and Broadbrim both remained anxiously on the look out, to prevent the catastrophe that was so much dreaded.

Without, however, encountering any impediment, the boat sailed up, until, at last, she stood quite into the mouth of the cavern.

Here they found that its size exceeded that which they had even presumed it to be. It was, at the least, seventy feet high, and fifty wide; but, up to its very entrance, not the least appearance presented itself of any shallowing of the water,—of which the brigadier was particularly proud,—nor the slightest glimmering of light,—of which he was particularly ashamed.

"Now, brigadier, I hope you are sufficiently convinced," said Herbert; "here we are, and the place is as dark as an utter want of light can make it."

"Well, I admit, for once, I am mistaken," said the soldier; "or, at least, I suppose I was, for if there had been the least light to be seen outside, there must be the same light to be seen in; but, as I see there is not, I suppose we must just sail back, and lie off the island, and try and find another a little more hospitable."

"Well, I believe that's all that remains for us," answered Herbert.

"Then shall I push off?" said the brigadier.

"Ay, you may as well, as you are forward."

With a heavy sigh at his disappointment, the brigadier rose up to apply his stout foot to the rock, and send the boat back once more "yards the sea."

Scarcely, however, had he stood erect to do so, when he exclaimed,—

“Thunder and turf, the rascal, there he is, there he is, at last, as sure as St. Bridget was an Irishman!”

“There who is?”

“The light, the blessed light of day,” roared the brigadier; “only he was too proud to speak all the while.”

“Take care, then, and let us have a look at it.”

“Ay, ay, take care!—no, no!—sorrow the inch I’ll ever move from this spot, until you are convinced I’ve made no mistake this time.”

“But how can we be convinced, if you won’t move to let us get in the same position to have a peep at it.”

“Ha, well, I see how it will be: the moment I move, the Jack-o’-lantern will be cutting his immortal stick again; and then it will be—brigadier, how came you to get so mortal drunk? Ha, well, there it is, take your boast out of it; there it is, I’ll swear, if I haven’t seen the daylight through this cavern, I’ll never see anything again.”

The others now, for a moment, resumed the place of the brigadier, and in an instant perceived that he had been quite right in his assertion, and that the daylight did, at that particular point, glimmer down faintly into the darkness that otherwise surrounded it.

Assured of this, and great caution being used, Herbert immediately steered the boat into the cave, the large capacity of which rendered it unnecessary to strike the mast, while the way which the cutter had upon her was quite sufficient to impel her onwards; and thus, as they proceeded, the glimmer strengthened into daylight, until suddenly, without touching against any impediment, the boat shot out, or rather in, upon one of the most lovely little lakes it is possible for the imagination to picture.

“Oh, how exquisite!” exclaimed Nautila.

“There, my pigeons, thank me for that,” roared the exulting brigadier.

“Truly, our lines are fallen in pleasant places at last,” quoth Broadbrim.

“Oh, this is very nice, isn’t it, sir,” added the approving Anna Maria.

“A capital cover for game,” said the parson; “see, the widgeon are so tame, we may almost catch them with our hands; but, confound it, where are our guns?”

And Wynn Powell pointed to some wild fowl swimming close to the boat.

“Don’t speak of guns, sir,” said St. John; “it brings back to my mind all the agony of losing my favourite rifle afresh; and as for this lake, and the singular entrance to it, it’s wholly volcanic

altogether, sir! Indeed, I have no doubt this piece of water before us, which, you see, lies quite in a basin, now fills up the void of an extinct crater."

"Thou hast hit it, friend St. John, thou hast hit it. I see on every side of me traces that confirm the justice of thy remark, and doubt not, when we land, that we shall find even particles of lava scattered about."

"For anything that we can tell to the contrary," rejoined the old man, "our footsteps, should we be permitted to land, may be the first that have ever touched this soil since the flood. For when this was a volcano, it must have been part of a different world from that which now exists."

"It is a solemn thought," said the quaker, musingly; "and if our new home may prove as happy as it is beautiful—it is well, indeed! Friend Symonds," extending out his hand, and taking that of the brigadier, "this is an additional piece of service, for which we owe thee our thanks; and for myself, I freely offer every atonement for any injurious remarks I have made."

"Ay, ay, father Broadbrim," returned the brigadier, clasping the other's hand as warmly as it was offered, "it's always the way with you mighty high horses: you snort, and start, and shy, and kick up your heels at the poor donkey, wherever you meet him throughout every high road in the kingdom. But once catch you safe in the pound, my little jewels, and then who shall open the gate, but dear little Neddy? bless his heart! But there, that was always the fate of genius, let it wear a rough coat, have ears, a thought bigger than the rest of mankind, and be given to a pace a little different from his neighbours; and there is no turn too bad for it, and no contempt too great. But wait till Mr. Thingembob, the great brass-founder, is ill; oh, then he must have the genius's book to read, to make his mind happy at night; or Alderman Swillandeat is seized with vertigo, then the poor, 'thin, pale student' is implored, like a divinity, to save his life and bleed a vein. You are all alike, sir, you are all alike; and now, gentlemen, unaccustomed as I am to public speaking, I just beg to propose, as in gratitude to the illustrious individual, by whom this harbour was so lately discovered, that it be called henceforth, now and for ever *Lago Della Maria*, or Symonds's lake."

This christening having been accepted with acclamations, the party now proceeded, in great joy and thankfulness, to steer to the shore

CHAPTER LXXVIII.

"The old signor— we'll soon, we'll soon ensnare,
I hear him coming slowly down the stair."

Othello Travestie.

"She turned, and lo, her father stood before her."

BYRON.

As the boat proceeded towards one of the numerous thickets that on all sides bordered the lake, overhanging the bold rocky margin with a beautiful and fairy fringe, composed of every species of exotic: here the high palm, towering into the heavens; at its foot, the low, fleshy, prickly pear; on one side of it, the vast and magnificent mahogany tree; and stretching over towards the water, the long, rough, irregular branches of the springy cork; the wild aloe, flowering unnoticed; the feathery tamarind, throwing out its spray-like branches; the mango, bursting with its ripe and golden fruit, which fell unvalued on the crystal lake. These, and a thousand other plants and trees, of which our friends knew not even the appearance, grew up on all sides, testifying to the richness of the soil, the plenty that bounteous nature offered for their wants, and the happiness that might yet be in store for them, if they choose to enjoy it.

"See, my dear father, what a beautiful little island that is, near the shore," said Nautila, pointing to an exquisite spot, which had hitherto been taken for part of the banks. "Now, I propose," continued she, "that whenever we proceed to build our houses, we take possession of that island, and build there. The lake will then be a great protection to us, if there should be any noxious animals, which, no doubt, there are, as a counterbalance to the beauty and fertility we see around us."

"I am very glad to hear you make that remark," cried the father. "Almost a similar thought was passing through my own mind. I am glad to see that my lessons, as to what is necessary to enable you to take care of yourself, have not been thrown away. All these small islands, for I see several around us, dotting the lake, are admirably adapted for the purpose you name, and the largest, to which you point, shall, as you suggest, be among the first places on which we build. So, therefore, in honour of you, it shall at once be called 'Nautila's Island.'"

For the first evening nothing more was attempted than a slight

walk to the shore; but even this was speedily abandoned; the undergrowth being so excessive, that it was not only laborious for the ladies of the party to attempt to wade through, but, doubtless, also dangerous, as concealing the reptiles with which it was only reasonable to suppose an island with such tropical productions would probably abound; for where they were, or what was the name of the land on which they stood, they had not the most distant conception. Resigning, therefore, all attempt to penetrate far that evening, the new settlers simply added to their repast a few of those fruits which they well knew to be wholesome, and, mooring their boat off Nautila's Island, succeeded in erecting on board the cutter a temporary awning, under which they all enjoyed far better repose than had visited the eyes of any of the party since their fatal meeting with the ice. Even as they fell to sleep, superabundant evidence reached them that they need fear no longer the pangs of starvation.

The fish leaped and played about them until they almost came on board the boat, while the moon shone down upon the calm, placid lake with a purity and intensity of light that almost rivalled the day. Scarce an undulation could be detected on that serene mirror! The night breeze bore to their ears the heavy booming of the distant surf, as the sea thundered down upon the weather-side of their iron-bound isle of refuge. Not a cloud, no, nor the slightest fleece, was seen to dim the lustrous purple of the heavens, where every star shone forth to be reflected in the silver tide below, while, as the murmur of the surge reached them, there was also borne upon the same gale that conveyed its deep tones the exquisite perfume of the orange-flower.

Nautila was the last to retire to the temporary division of the boat astern. As she and Herbert gazed on the beautiful scene before them, and contrasted all its attractions with the frightful iceberg they had so recently quitted, it almost appeared as if life had assumed a different guise, or that they had suddenly passed through the grim portals of that death which had been so long threatening them into the regions of a brighter and a fairer world. Visions of distant happiness seemed spread out before them on every side. Blest with the realization of a love so ardent as that which existed between them both, what were the world's pleasures to this youthful pair? Was it not infinitely better, thus remote from all its jarring influences, its vain and vile ambitions, to pass away in the harmless amusements of such a desert that life which Providence had mercifully spared from the late series of horrors, to crown with an opportunity of happiness so perfect as that which awaited them, than to exist for the mere despicable vanities of the worldling?

What joy would there not be in building their cottages?—in fishing in the lake?—in labouring at their plantations, and, as far as might be, in following up the many innocent amusements now

opened to them? Blest with that wealth which, perhaps, after all, is, if rightly used, the greatest treasure that Heaven can bestow,—the combined riches of a powerful intellect and an amiable heart, they both already felt assured that, even if no return to their own land was permitted to them, they would still become not only contented but supremely blest in that which was given to them in its stead.

With a feeling of the truest gratitude for blessings so much greater than they had ever expected, they now parted for the night, and were soon wrapped in profound repose. But even with the deep silence of sleep they were unable to believe in the happiness actually extended to them. They had both passed through so many perils, that still, though the senses were locked in oblivion, in their dreams they were tempest-tossed, and wrecked, and beset anew; while occasionally, as if to enhance their horrors, they appeared to be placed ashore upon a perfect paradise; and then, when the realization of their hopes seemed all but perfect, they were once more snatched from each other's arms, and made to endure a thousand perils more.

At last, morning dawned in the entrancing light of the new-born day; the mountains of their fairy lake gradually displayed themselves in charms exquisite as the most enthusiastic lover of nature or woman could desire.

The sun, streaming down the vast amphitheatre of rock, showed it on every side to be covered with the most delightful plants, many of them in full blossom, and breathing a perfume that stole upon the senses with almost magic effect. Nautila was the first to shake off the influence of the drowsy god, and, raising the curtain of the boat, and peeping out like some timid deer, that approaching the water to drink, gazes bashfully around, she remained for many minutes enjoying the delightful picture offered on every side of her, until, at length, happening to look down upon the water, she beheld her own image reflected on its glassy surface, perfect as any mirror could have returned it. Like a child pleased with some unexpected toy, she remained for some moments arranging her hair in this looking-glass of nature, until Herbert, awaking, also looked down over the side, and, to his surprise and infinite amusement, he beheld his mistress's face in the water. This drawing from him an exclamation of delight, the beauty started at the sound, and withdrew, laughing and blushing, to the privacy afforded by the screen.

A general signal was now given, and the whole party, drawing their boat to the shore, began their preparations for the day. The only implement with which our party were provided for the purpose of hewing down the enormous growth of underwood around, were three cutlasses, which the mutineers appeared to have thrust more securely into the boat than the rest of the arms which they were known to have carried off with them. Sharpening these on

a piece of rock, Herbert and the brigadier commenced cutting their path to the high ground above them. They had not far to pursue this labour, as the island was not very large, and trees of considerable magnitude filled up its centre; the base and edges towards the water were the parts where the brushwood was thickest. A clear space once gained, they soon perceived that Nautila's choice of a residence was not only good in point of security, but that it was sheltered on all sides from the wind, and that it commanded several of the finest views possible. Having gathered some more fruit to add to their breakfast, immediately after this meal had passed, the labours of the day commenced in earnest.

The first object was to kindle a fire, which they resolved should so far imitate that of the Ghebers, that night or day it should never be allowed to go out. Here Herbert's phosphorous matches came into immediate demand, and having first dried them in the beams of the sun, one was ignited with the most sparing care, and applied to the pile of dried wood which had been previously formed. The merry blaze soon crackled and burnt cheerfully on the forest ground, sending up through the branches a long column of thin blue smoke, the first, in all human probability, that solitude had ever witnessed since its creation.

How merry was the laugh that then arose!—how it echoed through the arches of the forest on either shore, while the young people congratulated each other on at last appearing to survive the cruel destiny that had threatened them so severely.

Mr. St. John and Broadbrim stood back in a niche among the trees; and as they looked on the mirth of the younger individuals of the party, the quaker said with a sigh: "Would, friend St. John, we had among us, at this juncture, our poor shipmates, who appeared so happy on that memorable night before we ran upon the ice!"

"How shall we dare to judge?" replied the other. "In all probability, their happiness is far more complete than that of any of us! I can entertain no doubt, in my own mind, that they are long since beyond all care; and who shall say the same of us? It needs but for an adder of this fervid sun to sting that innocent girl standing before us," pointing to Nautila, "and how soon would all our joy be turned to grief! But come, thought was given to lighten life's load, and not to increase it; so we will at once choose the spot on which we must build our cottage."

Some broken limbs of a fallen and half-decayed tree having been put on the fire, this necessary addition to the comfort of the party was secured against going out, and got in a state of forwardness for the dish of fish, of which lively hopes were entertained. With a view to realise these, the fishing-lines which the mutineers had stowed in the boat were brought from the locker where those sons of Belial had placed them, and Wynn Powell,

who claimed to be a first-rate fisherman, set off upon the piscatory sport. The most ample success speedily crowned his efforts; in less than an hour and a half he returned to the party on shore, bringing with him a vast pile of fish of every description. The only question now was whether they might be eatable. One species, which the brigadier would persist in affirming to be the common Irish sea-trout, all agreed to promise well. There were one or two others also, of which great hopes were entertained. But whatever might be the experiment in point of cookery, whether they would prove good or bad, one thing now was quite certain—no further fears need be entertained of starvation, at least for all those who could endure fish diet.

Cheered by this intelligence, the rest of the party proceeded with redoubled vigour in the duties which now devolved upon them; and by two o'clock a space of eighty feet square was not only cleared, but pales driven in all around it, and a species of wattling, with the most supple boughs they could find, was already commenced as a beginning of their new home.

Fully fatigued for the present, though full of hope as to their future residence, a rude table was now made upon the fallen stem of the tree that had already contributed its branches to their fire, and what with the dish of fish so recently obtained from the lake, and the other articles of food they had before possessed, a most substantial meal was place before the wanderers.

The business of life now proceeded rapidly; with such ample grounds of prospective comfort to cheer them, we can wonder little that in the course of a week not only should an excellent hut be erected by their united labours, but that it should contain, as it did, several rooms, all duly divided for the accommodation of the numerous individuals that resided within its walls.

What with the various duties imposed by their necessities on all hands alike, and the great resources afforded by the island itself, it may easily be supposed that time stole away very swiftly. And when, at the end of a fortnight, the brigadier called Herbert aside with a degree of mystery in his looks, our hero more than suspected what was to be the subject of the conference.

"Now, my dear boy," said the brigadier, as soon as they had both reached a retired spot, "I have too great a confidence in you not to feel that you will, in a little project I have in hand, give me all the assistance in your power."

"Certainly, my dear fellow, of course I will; you may most assuredly rely upon me," said Herbert; "what is it?"

"Why, then, the truth," quoth the brigadier, "is nothing less than this. You see women, from the very nature of that imperfect education which society will insist on our enforcing upon them; I say, from the very nature of those imperfections, of which we are ourselves the cause, they are, as a natural consequence, bashful in the extreme. And, what's more, it's as long before

you can persuade them out of it as it is to knock the nervousness out of a young counsellor. And if ever you saw a poor devil just called to the bar, labouring away at a maiden speech, as I have, you would understand what that means well enough. Now you see, my dear fellow, it's of the utmost importance, as we are to live upon this island, that we should do so in some sort of comfort. And as it's quite clear that it will be many a long day before we see Old England again, it is quite clear, even if we ever do so, that one of the first duties you and I have to perform to ourselves, and that posterity which will some day inherit this very domain——”

“Is, I suppose, you mean to say, to get married, brigadier?”

“You have hit the very thing,” cried the brigadier; “such was the very project I was labouring to bring forth.”

“What, then, are *you* turned bashful?”

“A little, my dear fellow. Only a very little; the times, you see, require it. But the fact is, I cannot, for the soul of me, persuade that provoking little candlestick-maker to be the first to set the parson agoing, unless Miss Nautila will consent to give her hand to you at the same time. ‘What, in the name of fortune, has that to do with it?’ says I. ‘Oh, then it would look so,’ says she; and for the life and soul of me, it seems that’s the only answer I’m likely to get out of her. I know it isn’t quite the thing, nor is it at all that of which I approve, to come putting to you prying questions, touching matters on which you have not thought proper to consult me. Still, if you could forgive this little breach of etiquette, and affairs are in such a train between you and your lady fair, that you can accede to my request, upon my soul, my boy, you would infinitely oblige me if you would come into the absurd notions of my little candlestick-maker aforesaid, and let us finish this interesting matter off-hand at once. You see, I’ve a great notion of business; and what’s the use of our building huts, and all that sort of thing, when we leave the real occupation of life neglected?”

“The real occupation of life! I don’t understand you,” said Herbert, “nor what you mean.”

“Isn’t it as clear as mud in a wine-glass, what I mean? What in the name of fortune, is the use of an island without population? Population! population!—that’s what I mean. Now do you understand me?”

“Oh, yes, I understand you now; you mean to say you are not a disciple of Malthus.”

“Malthus be d—d,” said the brigadier; “what did he know about desert islands? I would as soon take my grandmother’s opinion upon gunshot wounds; but, without reference to whatever the opinions of my grandmother might be, may the saints preserve her, this blessed day—what do you say yourself, don’t you come into my doctrine?”

"Most entirely, my dear fellow. Population for ever!" exclaimed Herbert, clasping the brigadier by the hand.

"Thunder and turf, then," cried the major, as soon as he could get breath to speak, "cut off at once to your lady-love, and get her opinion upon it without delay. Thank God, we have no lawyers in the island to bother us with their infernal marriage-settlements, and, what's nearly as bad, no mantua-makers, milliners, corset and stay-makers, no child bed-linen warehouse keepers, jewellers, bonnet and cap-makers, or any of that infernal fry; they make a man wait till he half repents popping the question. All we have to do, therefore, is to go to the pretty little darlings, and get their consent. What do you say to to-morrow morning?"

"Oh, my dear fellow, you are in a vast deal too great a hurry. It isn't Nautila's consent to her marriage that is only necessary; there is such a person in the world as her father, remember."

"What!" said the brigadier, starting back, "do you mean to say that you shall want the consent of the father?"

"Yes," said Herbert, "I must."

"Oh, I see," said the brigadier; "you have got a little notion of and concerning those seventy-six thousand yellow boys. But, lord, what is the use of them here? Do you really entertain any remote idea that we shall ever get out of this infernal desert? and if not, why, then, where the devil is the use of the money, until a period, which you or I won't live to see, when, thanks to you and me, the island has arrived at that point of population which——"

"Why, my dear fellow, don't think me such a fool! When I say that I wish for the father's consent, it is not that I would ask for one farthing of the gold to which you allude; for, to tell you the truth, I'm so heartily sick about gold or money, it would not at all affect my heart if I were never more to behold either one or the other. But, I must confess, I differ with you, with respect to a parent's consent; it would materially diminish my happiness to have this withheld, to say nothing on one point of which I am certain, that unless her father's consent was withheld on grounds clearly unreasonable, I very much doubt whether any argument of mine would be sufficient to induce Nautila to marry me at all. What says your own damsel, does she not think the same? But, I forgot, she has lost her father; and that reminds me, though I have never yet found time to inquire what became of him;—let me see, I didn't see him on the ice at all, did I? didn't he quit the ship!"

"Quit the ship; he might have quitted the ship and welcome. I'm sure there would have been no one particularly anxious to have stopped him. But what do you think he did when the steamer struck on the ice? nothing less would serve his turn, than taking it into his head to be suddenly shocked when he found him-

self to be on the paddle-wheels in the sight of so much company, as he called it, without his breeches. And sitting down then and there, actually on the paddle-wheel by Jove, to draw on his pantaloons: presently there came along a topper of a wave, washed him clear off, and the infernal paddles being still going he was whipt under them, before I could even put out an arm to save him."

"And what became of him then?"

"Faith, you may ask that of Father Neptune; as far as I know he was pounded into candlesticks before I could say Jack Robinson. But, even if there had been fifty candlestick-makers on the island, provided the lady saw no objection, it isn't the consent of any one of them that I'd be taking the trouble to ask anyhow. But what I would do, and what you may do, of course, are two very different matters."

"Why, yes, rather," muttered our hero, though he did not give the words a distinct utterance, since they would little, if at all, have tended to improve the harmony existing between them.

"Therefore," said the brigadier, "let me know what you will do, that I may act accordingly."

"I will," said Herbert. "I will tell you that at once: I will lose no time in going to St. John, and asking him his consent to his daughter's marriage with me. I don't think that he can well refuse it, after all that has passed."

"All I can say is, he is a considerable brute if he does," quoth the impetuous brigadier; "and father or no father, I for one should lose no time in calling him to account, and there again is a matter of which nobody can judge so well as yourself; however, what you do, do quickly; and take my advice, if you find him at all crusty, don't hesitate to speak your mind boldly; have you the girl with you?"

"I should say most decidedly; but you know yourself you cannot always depend upon how a women will act, when placed in opposition to her parents, more especially if those parents have, generally speaking, been kind and considerate."

"Oh! I see well what a difficult game you have before you," said the brigadier; "still, if she remains firm, never mind—the rest will follow."

"Well, I agree with you," said Herbert, "and now let us see what fortune has in store for us."

"Then at any rate you will let me know?"

"On the moment I know anything myself," answered our hero, and turning round to add, "I cannot say that I am at all sorry that you should thus have come to me, since in reality it gives me a fair opportunity of broaching to the old gentleman a subject which, for the last three or four days, I have been wanting an opportunity to open."

"To be sure you have," said the brigadier; "don't you see at a glance what a lost creature you would be without my assistance."

There now, hurry off, for, by my sowl, I feel as though I could not wait any longer for anybody;" and the impatient brigadier pushed Herbert from him in the direction of the island on which Mr. St. John had not long before been seen fishing.

"Oh! Herbert," said the major, running after him, "if you should have to argue this matter at any length with Miss Nautila, be sure you wrap up very delicately——"

"What?" demanded Herbert.

"The argument about the population."

"You be hanged!" said our hero, blushing like a girl; and hitting the teasing brigadier under the short ribs, he was out of sight in a moment.

CHAPTER LXXIX.

"No, no, little jockey. You will be cunning to take me in, little jockey.—Won't you, little jockey?"

"O, impossible, sir."

Farce of "The Boy in Yellow."

WHEN our hero gained the island, he discovered, to his mortification, that Mr. St. John had previously quitted it for the flag-staff, a post formed from a rude tree, and bearing on it what purported to be a union jack, thus displayed in the hopes of its attracting the attention of some passing vessel; the captain of which might in this manner be led to send a boat on shore to the island, and so be the means of once more restoring our friends to their homes. Whether this hope was ever to be realized, remained to be seen; that they should entertain it, was but natural. A rude sort of platform had been cut near the flag-staff, and as it of course commanded a good view of the sea, it was a favourite walk of the old gentleman, who, as we have seen, gave himself up to the indulgences of the philosophic tribe;—to wit, talking to himself more than to his neighbours, and thinking considerably more than he spoke.

When Herbert approached, the old man looked at the anxious countenance of our hero, and slightly started.

"Don't make that request," said he, commencing the dialogue; "I am sorry I cannot grant it."

"Perhaps you will wait, sir, till I make it known," said Herbert, who little admired this opening of the interview.

"To convince, you, that I know perfectly well what you would ask," said Mr. St. John, "I read in your countenance, that you are come to request my consent to your marriage with my daughter; but your errand is vain, I cannot grant what you would demand."

Our hero's tongue cleaved to the roof of his mouth, and involuntarily he looked round to see if the terrace on which the old man was walking, by any means commanded a view of the spot, on which he had been talking to the brigadier; but a second glance convinced him of the folly of entertaining such a notion for a moment. The penetration, therefore, which had simply read his mind in his countenance, was but a part of that wonderful knowledge of everything that related to his species which had often before struck Herbert so forcibly in the character of Mr. St. John.

Finding that the subject was opened for him, and opened dead against him, as it were, by the court, to use a legal phrase, he had nothing left but to make as complete a struggle as he could, under these adverse circumstances.

"I think, sir," commenced Herbert, "that when you hear what I have to urge, you will be induced to remodel your decision; surely the impression which you once formed against me—and I do not seek to say it was not perfectly just—may have been considerably altered by recent events."

"Perhaps they might have been, had it been possible; but I can simply tell you now that the decision which I have formed, and which prevents my granting your request, is one that had precedence in my mind, long before my embarkation on board the steamer. Within three minutes of my becoming acquainted with the fact that you had become guilty of the act, which I imputed to you, I solemnly vowed that no consideration on earth should be sufficient for me, to permit your marriage with my daughter. Whether such a vow was wise or foolish, is not the question now; you know that I never would allow, even a common resolution once taken, to be broken, and therefore, far less will I tamper with so solemn a determination as the one to which I allude: had I been simply bound by a common and ordinary resolve upon the subject, I admit I might have given way. Your conduct since the first of the unhappy troubles that have followed us at sea, would, I think, have been my self-justification for so doing. Though, remember, I by no means approve of the step you took, in tracing myself and daughter to the steamship."

"Surely," said Herbert, you cannot blame me for that. Who, as a lover, would not have done the same?"

"I admit the force of the argument," said the old man, "and on that consideration alone, I say no more upon that score: but

still, once for all, on the other point I must remain unchanged. With my daughter I never can, nor will, allow you to marry."

"Well, but surely, sir, you cannot be so cruel, even to her?"

"Do not be too hasty, sir, in your considerations; I have held out to her every warning: time after time, when I have seen her giving way to the pleasure of your society, I told her again and again, that I never would give my consent to your marriage. I had every right to presume, therefore, that she communicated the same fact to you."

"No, she has not done so, sir; though I can easily imagine she did not wish to distress me, by dwelling on obstacles which she might well be pardoned for imagining would all at last be happily overcome."

"Begging your pardon, sir, she had no right to form any such conclusion. Nothing I am sure that she has ever seen in my character could have justified her in imagining that I should retract to-morrow from what I may have said to-day; but you at any rate, sir, have no right to plead ignorance of my intention in this matter; if you will only take the trouble to refer to the letter I wrote, you will find a full warning of my intentions, under my own hand and seal; if after that you chose once more to seek out Miss St. John, and expose your mind to the influence of attractions, the full power and danger of which no one knows better than myself, the fault, you will please to remember, is your own and not mine. In conclusion, I shall only say, that for your own individual merits, and the manner in which your great abilities have been exerted for my safety and that of the other unfortunate passengers of the steamer, I shall ever entertain the greatest gratitude and respect. If we live to reach England, I trust I shall yet have an opportunity of manifesting this in a manner suitable to both of us; and if not, I am extremely sorry that circumstances, as to which you are not wholly blameless, have entirely prevented me from granting the request which you have preferred. Now, sir, this is my final decision. I hope you will have the kindness never to renew the application, and as the point, for which you sought my retirement, is accomplished, I beg to wish you a good morning."

Here the old gentleman made Herbert the most dignified bow, while our hero, utterly confounded by the reception he had met, returned it in silence, and left the old boy to his meditations.

Rage—anger—pity—self-contempt, and a thousand other keen emotions, shook the breast of our unhappy friend as he returned to communicate to the brigadier the utter want of success that had attended his efforts. The brigadier did not wait for our hero to begin, but taking his cue from Herbert's countenance, while yet at a distance, lifted up his right hand and dashed it furiously against his left exclaiming—

"Thunder and turf, just as I thought! this then is what comes

of asking parent's love, and all that sort of bother. However, this time, don't say it was me; don't say I didn't give you fair warning how it would be; don't say I didn't tell you plainly it would be a long time before you succeeded in peopling the island, if you set about it in that fashion, any way. Well, a wilful man will have his way, and so I suppose you'll find out with a father."

"Oh, my dear Symonds, pray spare me," said Herbert, "there is very little in my case, I assure you, that will bear laughing at;" and in a few minutes, Herbert had given him, word for word, his interview with the father.

"Well, by my sowl," said the brigadier, "if this isn't the most insulting treatment, I ever heard of;—refuse a man, and give him no more explanation of it than may be trumped up from the story of an old oath. Upon my soul, sir, he is a pretty fellow; but as he has thrown off all delicacy towards you, do the same towards him. Call him out, sir; parade him, parade him without the loss of a moment's time; and that is my most mature and deliberate advice. I'll take your message, sir; I'll walk him out for it; I should have liked to have seen the candlestick-maker dare to have refused me the hand of his daughter: see how soon I would have settled the matter for him, that's all."

"Oh, my dear Symonds, the thing is impossible. How do you think I could ask Nautila to accept the hand of a lover, ruddy with her father's blood? I wonder, with your strong sense, you can think of such a thing for a moment."

"Faith, and I wonder, with your strong sense, that you can see the least impropriety in it."

"Well then," said Herbert, "if there is no other way in the world, I will not have her by that; I never can nor will forget that I am not entirely blameless in this matter. You never saw nor can you imagine what they have lost in quitting the exquisite, I might say fairy home, which the old man had fitted for himself and child; and from which he has been torn and ejected at the very period of life, when such comforts are most necessary, by my act and deed, my absurd, my impertinent, ill-bred wager. What right had I, with a lie in my mouth—for it was little better—to break into the comforts of this old man's home; and taking advantage of his hospitality, to gain the affections of his daughter, and so finally to be the means of bringing him here, to spend the evening of his days away from all those luxuries in which he was born, his books, his comforts of every description? No, I think he has great cause of complaint against me, quite sufficient to balance his present treatment of my suit to Nautila."

"Look here, my boy," said the brigadier, who had listened with knitted brow, and a fair allowance of patience, to this detail of our hero, "it may be all very virtuous in you to accuse yourself in this way, and exculpate the old man; and in reply I can only say, by

this and by that, it would have answered my purpose just as well to have heard such a story before you went up to speak to the old thief; but, however you may agree to settle matters between you, I feel myself bound to give you my opinion, and declare that I know no mode of conducting matters one half so desirable as the good old satisfactory plan I have before mentioned of cut and thrust. Since, however, you won't have that on any terms, there seems nothing for it but to give him absolution, or perhaps"—and the brigadier appeared to catch at this as a great point—"good luck may send he is a Catholic, in which case I have a bit of the true crass, that I always carry round my neck." And the brigadier offered to take this undoubted relic from the place where it was so carefully bestowed.

"No, no," said Herbert; "it's no use to talk of that; the mere offer of such a thing would rivet him more firmly than ever to his previous notions."

"What!" said the brigadier, starting back with apparent horror, "do you mean to tell me he isn't a believer in the true crass? Oh, faith, if he is such a heretic as that, this simple matter explains all."

"No, he is not a heretic," said Herbert; "but he merely thinks there is some mistake as to the wood, which corrupt monks, in times past, have sold to gull mankind."

"Oh!" said the brigadier, with a shake of the head, "if he is a man apt to indulge in such notions as those, why, then, faith, we shall find him mighty difficult to manage, I perceive. The case grows worse and worse; he's a bad bargain, this fellow, though he didn't look so when he was giving away that seventy-six thousand pounds worth of gold of his; but there! how the mind of man may be deceived, and of woman too sometimes, though she's a 'cute creature where character is concerned. By the Lord of Innisfail, I'll give it up; I don't see how we can manage him; we have nothing now to do but to run off with the girl; so make your mind up to it."

"No," said Herbert, "that is just what I cannot make my mind up to, although it may appear strange to you. I confess I like the old man very much; he was very kind to me before that unfortunate bet came to his knowledge: and I think myself bound to make every allowance for his anger."

"Well, have it your own way, sir—have it your own way; but you'll excuse my speaking what I think."

"Oh, certainly!" said Herbert; "what is it?"

"Why, simply this, that you are both of you a pair of the rummest devils I ever knew; so that is all about it."

"Well," said Herbert, "is that all? There is not much intelligence, then, in that, nor can I be surprised that you should think so."

"No, faith, there can be no surprise about that; there can be

no question on the point. I never met the like of either of you; and as to advising you in the matter how to proceed, by my sowl it bangs Banagher."

"Well," said Herbert, "I think this would be the best way: for me to communicate to Nautila what has happened, and then for me to refrain from holding any intercourse with the old man; this would in a sort of way throw a general damper on the spirits of the party, and might afford an opportunity to Broadbrim to remonstrate with him."

"Oh, for the matter of that, I'd remonstrate with him."

"No, no," said Herbert; "I am very much obliged to you; but I know the character of the man too well. He might respect the age of the quaker; the only good produced by the remonstrance of a young man with him would be an excessive row, and a determination to maintain his ground more obstinately than ever."

"Well, you certainly know him best, and a most cantankerous fellow he appears to be. I see Broadbrim coming you; had better lose no time in communicating to him the difficulty touching which you require his assistance."

CHAPTER LXXX.

“They who in quarrels interpose,
Must often get a bloody nose.”

HUDIBRAS.

THE plan proposed by Herbert having been broached to Broadbrim, he at once fell in with it. We have already said, that both the young people possessed his warm regards in an eminent degree, and he was unfeignedly sorry to find that such an unnecessary bar had been placed, as he conceived, to their happiness. Promising to do all he could, it was agreed that Herbert should henceforth affect great stateliness towards the father, who, in the common acceptation of the term, he was to send to Coventry. The brigadier was to appear to be in Herbert's confidence and to comport himself in a manner exceedingly distant; the quaker, on the contrary, was to simulate entire ignorance, and be all wonderment and surprise at the scene enacted before him; while Nautila and the fair Anna Maria were both to take the part of Niobe—all tears. As for the rest of the party, they were not taken into the plot; their conduct, therefore, under the circumstances, was resigned entirely to nature, who no doubt would make it perfect enough; an exception being made in favour of Wynn Powell, who was to join his surprise to that of Broadbrim, and with his surprise, also, was to join his interposition.

When the whole of this pretty by-play was explained to Nautila,

“What,” said she, “am I to cry, and in public? why it is a thing I never did in my life; I shall never be able to manage that part. You had better let me pretend to be sulky. I might get up a good pout; but as to crying, I am quite certain I shall fail in that, and the end of it will be, I shall perhaps break out in a laugh, and that will betray all; while Anna Maria, depend upon it, would cry enough for both of us.”

This argument prevailed: anything was better than risking a laugh, which, by an exposure of the plot, would, as Nautila had said, ruin everything; the crying was, therefore, by unanimous consent, surrendered entirely to Anna Maria, who promised to give them a most ample sufficiency. Nautila was to make her eyes exceedingly red, just as if she had been indulging in amusements of the lachrymal description, and pursue what other line of

conduct her superior knowledge of her father's character made her consider necessary to prove effectual for the furtherance of their scheme.

These preliminaries being duly arranged, when the dinner call was heard, all parties hung back, and at last the old man, as they had wished, was among the first to walk in, when immediately the preconceived conspiracy began to be carried into execution.

At first the old gentleman looked up somewhat taken by surprise; presently, after having glanced very keenly round from one face to the other, he rose quietly from the table, and made for the door. As he was going, Broadbrim stayed his progress, saying,—

"Friend, what is the matter? what is the meaning of all this; art thou ill?"

Mr. St. John stopped for a moment, and giving him a most significant and scrutinizing look replied, "No, sir, only sick!" and immediately went into the open air.

"This is just what I expected," whispered Nautila to Herbert; "depend upon it, we shall never succeed in deceiving him."

And so, in truth, Herbert had feared, and knowing the old man's horror of anything like plot or artifice, he almost dreaded lest the very means they were now taking to gain his consent, should prove the very causes of riveting him more firmly in his opposition.

"At any rate," said our hero, "though I fear he has detected our plot, we have still laid sufficient ground to enable Broadbrim to interfere."

"With little effect, I am afraid," said Nautila; "but we shall be able to see better presently."

Accordingly, they waited, and waited, and waited, but the old gentleman never returned, and one of the party, presently glancing from the window, beheld him plodding his way up the hill opposite—as much as to say—"Sooner than be balked in this way by any of you, I would prefer to go without food." Such was the interpretation, at least, put upon his conduct by those who knew him best; and, accordingly, they no longer waited his reappearance at dinner, but finished their interrupted meal in comparative silence; after it was over, Broadbrim was to seek Mr. St. John, where they conceived he would be found, namely, at his favourite flag-staff, and there commence his intended remonstrance.

The quaker was as good as his word, and having finished the meal, that temporarily engaged his attention, departed, as he hoped, to the service of his friend. As he expected, the old gentleman was found at the flag-staff, pacing away very busily.

"Friend," began Broadbrim, "may I venture to ask—"

"No, sir," interrupted St. John, "you may not."

"Why, friend, how dost thee know what I am going to say?"

"What is that to you, sir, how I know it?" said the old man tartly. "It is quite sufficient that I do know it. I know perfectly well, and so do you, indeed, no man better, that you are come to ask a very impertinent question, and to interfere in a matter in which you have no possible concern; and therefore, to save you all further trouble, I will neither give you leave to ask the question you sought, nor will I grant the request which would have followed it. So, now, sir, I hope you have your answer?"

"It is an answer, friend, which I cannot take," said the quaker, "and it does equal injustice to me and thee."

"How does it do any injustice to you, sir?"

"In the most obvious way, friend. In presuming I was going to ask a favour, before thou couldst judge what was in my thoughts, or could possibly say whether I was going to ask a favour or not."

"For all who can read, sir," said Mr. St. John, "every man carries on his countenance the *libretto* of his thoughts."

"Pray, friend St. John, speak to me in thy mother tongue; for I neither understand nor value any foreign jargon," interrupted the quaker, glad to catch his antagonist on any weak point, however trivial; "and, out of the courtesy of a gentleman, be not so hasty to condemn before thee hearest."

"Well, sir! Well! If I must be intruded upon, pray speak out, and pray be quick."

"As for being quick, friend, methinks thee art quick enough for both of us; but the matter on which I wish to speak to thee is simply this:—I have been inquiring of our young friends yonder, what had chanced to disturb the equanimity of our little party, and I hear, with great grief and surprise, that thou hast refused thy consent to the marriage of thy daughter with that manly and excellent youth, friend Herbert."

"Well, sir, and if I have, what is that to you?"

"Why, friend, it is much to me, very much. How is it possible that we can continue to enjoy that happiness of which we fondly hoped to possess ourselves, after all our troubles, if thou, by refusing thy consent to a union which I and all the others around believed to be a matter entirely approved of by thee, how can such perversity on thy part fail to bring discontent and sorrow amongst us? Friend Herbert is entitled to the gratitude and affection of us all, and naturally, therefore, we must all sympathize with him, if he be disappointed in a matter on which, and with such good reason, he has evidently set his heart; while, as for thy daughter, Nautila, surely, friend, that heart must be out of right unison, which could look on her grief and not share it. Thus, then, by the sorrows of these young people, we shall all, more or less, be made miserable, and all this thou mightst avert if thou didst so please."

"Then, sir, I don't so please, and that's all about it."

"And exactly I think, friend, it is on that score I think thou art so much to blame."

"Well, sir, at any rate, I shall not be schooled by you."

"But, I say, friend, thee must be schooled by me. When thee wast in danger from the mutineers, thou didst not find me slow then to render what assistance was in my power; and, now we are all in danger of having our happiness clouded by thy perversity, depend on it, I shall not be less determined in warning thee of a danger in which thou standest from thyself."

"Now, sir, if this is all you have to communicate to me, I presume I may once more be allowed to enjoy the seclusion of my own walk."

"Certainly, friend, the moment thou givest thy consent to the union of the young people."

"What, sir, do you take me for an absolute fool, that, in a case where I have thought myself bound to refuse all the entreaties of a young man to whom I acknowledge myself indebted, do you take me, I say, for such an absolute fool, sir, as to think that the first busy meddler can persuade me to that which I would not grant, even to my own inclinations? I will consent to no such union as you desire."

"Then, friend, thou art exceeding unreasonable, and dost behave very ill. If thou didst not intend to consent to their union, thou hadst no right to permit them to be so much together. Still more unkind is thy conduct in this matter, seeing that all our troubles and sorrows have been brought upon us through thy instrumentality, and the wealth thee wast unwise enough to take to sea. The least thou couldst have done would have been to throw no unnecessary obstacles to obstruct the happiness of those around thee; and I yet hope, that when thee considerest this matter as thee ought to do, thee wilt at last give thy approbation to a marriage that every one else conceived to be a matter wholly agreeable to thy own inclinations."

Mr. St. John here knitted his brows for some moments in silence, evidently much affected by that well-timed allusion of Broadbrim's to the old gentleman's wealth having been the cause of bringing them all into such a scrape. Under this remark, it is quite clear that he winced considerably, but the pause which he gave in the reply was not to debate whether he could give the consent asked of him, but simply to find out how he could best rebuff a charge, which, seemingly, had great justice.

After a few moments, he said in reply: "If there be anything in what you urge, as to my having been the cause of all your unhappiness, the argument simply amounts to this; that no man has a right to embark money on the high seas, because there may be scoundrels among the crew to plot its seizure—perfect absurdity, sir; therefore, that argument is good for nothing; and, surely, things have come to a pretty pass, if a father is not to be

the best judge as to whether a man is to marry his child or not; and, once for all, I tell you I won't be interfered with in the governance of my own family, by any pretence whatever. If, as you so politely insinuate, I'm wrong in that determination, that is a matter for my own discretion, and if I am wrong, I must answer for it. I won't be preached to by any one. Once for all, I tell you, Mr. Herbert shall never marry my daughter; nothing that can be said shall alter my determination on this point; and, as to making the other gentleman on the side of you uneasy," pointing to Wynn Powell, who had accompanied Broadbrim, "rest quite satisfied on that point. I shall seek out some other locality without delay, and at once withdraw myself and child, and servant, to its seclusion. Long as I have known the class of bipeds who are pleased to call themselves society, I never knew them exist for any better purpose than that of tormenting each other, and even to this lone spot, the same cursed trick pursues them. Now, sir, I hope you are satisfied with the result of your interference, and I have to wish you a very good morning."

"Well, friend, since thou insistest on it, I have no alternative left, but to wish thee the same. I came on behalf of all who are here classed together, none of whom certainly have shown any lack of zeal on thy behalf, to ask a favour for them at thy hands. I cannot well say I expected the treatment that I have received, and I must yet indulge a hope, that when a cooler moment comes, thou wilt grant all we seek at thy hands." And here, Broadbrim returning the other's bow, was about to depart, when St. John abruptly added,—

"Depend upon it, I will do nothing of the sort, so don't expect it."

And sadly disconcerted at his interference, from which Herbert hoped so much, neighbour Broadbrim repaired to his younger friends to report the failure of his embassy.

"Do you think," anxiously demanded our hero, "that if I wait patiently, there is any hope of his softening down towards us?"

"No, friend Herbert," said Broadbrim, "from all I can gather from the perverse man, I cannot detect the least ground to promise you anything of the sort."

"What then is to be done; do you think I am bound to submit?"

The expression of the quaker, at this question, was truly ludicrous.

"Why, friend," said he, curling up his mouth to give utterance, "we all know, that if we can bring the flesh to obey the spirit, the father hath the most indisputable claims upon his child's obedience; and, though in such a case, most young men of thy persuasion, would think themselves justified in calling in the assistance of our friend here, the minister, still it is a matter for thee to

consider, how far thee art strong enough in the spirit, to resist such suggesting of the flesh."

"Well, by *mine* honour," said the parson, "I have no hesitation to declare, that if the case were *mine*, I would at once make the girl my wife off hand, whether her father liked it or not; and allow the flesh and the spirit to settle it together, as best they might."

"Well," said Herbert, "then, if I can get Nautila's consent to marry me, will you tie us up?"

"Yes, by *mine* honour I will, for though I do not happen to have with me any copy of the ritual prescribed by our church; yet my memory is quite good enough to supply the omission, quite."

"Very well then," said Herbert, "if that's the case, if you will all be here this evening, just as if you were all fishing from the rocks, I'll ask Nautila to accompany me to you, and we will be married at once."

"Give me your hand," said the brigadier: "I admire your spirit: it's a matter after my own heart, for may I be eternally doomed to single blessedness, if I'd allow the best father that ever walked, to keep me out of marrying not only one of his daughters, but a whole family of them, provided the little darlings had a mind that way, which, I confess, is not very likely, except for the matter of the argument, nor unless, perhaps, they were told not to do it, or anything of that sort. However, I'll be here, with the little candlestick-maker to the turning of a second, and if you should feel at all distressed about calling the old gentleman to account, in respect that the daughter might object to marry a gentleman, who had been so unfortunate as to give a quietus to her own father, leave that matter to me, sir, entirely to me, sir, and depend upon it, it will go hard with me, if I don't contrive somehow or other to pick a nate little quarrel with him, before the matter's gone much farther; and, then if anything should happen to the old boy in an affair with me, you understand, of course nobody can be so unreasonable as to blame you for it, of course not."

"Why, as to that, Symonds, I trust," said Herbert, "you will not find any occasion for troubling yourself on this score; when once we are fairly married, any further interposition from him would be too late."

"Why, true, that may be so," said the brigadier, "I never thought of that. At any rate, go your way, and get Miss Nautila's consent, and a fig for all the rest of it."

CHAPTER LXXXI.

"I wish to get married, but don't know how!"

Song, "May Day Morning Early."

PURSUANT to the advice given him on all sides, Herbert now directed his steps in search of his lady-love. Considerable persuasion was necessary before he could induce the damsel to entertain the same views which he had so readily adopted; but when, at last, he explained the utter hopelessness there seemed to be of ever bringing the old man to reason, as well as the injustice of the conduct he was pursuing, Nautila consented, with considerable reluctance, to pursue the line of conduct desired, and to meet our hero at the appointed rendezvous for the marriage of herself and Anna Maria. Delighted to have accomplished thus much, Herbert retired from his mistress's presence, and hurried to communicate the good news to the friendly brigadier.

Scarcely, however, had he quitted the hut in which they had arranged the rendezvous for the evening, when from the outside, and at the very door, he met Mr. St. John entering, with looks certainly of the most perturbed character, and followed at a little distance by Mrs. Cerberus, weeping most plenteously. Something most unusual struck him in the appearance of the old father; but, adhering to the conduct on which he had resolved, they passed one another without speaking. Nor was it without reason that Mr. St. John was thus moved.

Scarcely had neighbour Broadbrim left him, than he set out on a ramble of discovery, taking his course due south, to see if he could light upon any eligible site whereon to carry into execution his threatened plan of retiring from the rest of the community. He had not proceeded very far, before the sounds of some female voice, in evident distress, met his ear, and caused him to pause with some perplexity. At first, he thought it must be the accent of Nautila; but as the yielding to grief was a matter so unusual with her nature, he set this down as a trick, to which recourse was evidently had to move his compassion, and determining not to be so played upon, he returned back. A fresh wail, however, altered his opinions as to the utterer of the sounds, and the end sought to be gained by them; it was clearly not Nautila's voice, nor, unless he were much mistaken, was it the wailing of any feigned distress. He then supposed that it might

be Miss Anna Maria ; but on listening for a few minutes longer, he renounced this idea.

By this time, curiosity was thoroughly roused, and anxious to know who the sufferer might be, he pushed cautiously forward, and to his unutterable surprise, found prostrate at the foot of a little crucifix, which was planted on the rock, no less a person than Mrs. Cerberus, moaning most piteously.

For some seconds her master continued gazing, as if he doubted the evidence of his own senses, while, without intending, almost without thinking of it, he listened to the moanings of the disturbed penitent.

"How shall I ever break it to him !" continued the unhappy woman, clasping her hands in the greatest agony. "How shall I tell him, after all that he has endured, that she is not his child, and he so wrapt up in her as he is ? How shall I tell him, proud as he was of his old ancestry and ancient title, that she I have allowed him to nurse in his bosom, after all occupies a place that does not belong to her, while the real heir is wandering somewhere this day, a beggar and an outcast upon the face of the earth ? and I, who have eaten his bread, and found a refuge in his kindness in all my sorrows, I have been a party to this deceit, lured by a hope of wealth I can now never hope to gain, and tempted by the vanities of a world that seems to have melted from my very sight ! I cannot tell it him—I cannot ; and if not, then what double sorrow I shall cause where I owe so much gratitude and affection. Holy Virgin, support me in the double bitterness of this hour !"

As Mr. St. John heard these words, some dreadful emotion blanched his lips to an ashy paleness ; and, while his knees smote each other beneath the weight of his body, he seemed wholly unable to command his steps to advance towards the spot where knelt the self-accusing culprit.

At last, after the last accents of sorrow we have attempted to describe, the unhappy woman threw herself forward on the ground, and gave vent to sobs and imprecations of the most acute upbraiding.

Old St. John at last approached, fastening on her a look of just such horror as the ordinary class of spectators would bestow on a spectre just arisen from the grave, to blast, at a single word, every hope in life.

After a few seconds thus spent, the paroxysm seemed to abate ; the penitent raised her head from the position in which it had been cast, and raising her eyes towards heaven, the first object they encountered was the fierce and determined countenance of Mr. St. John.

With a terrific shriek, the mourner threw her hands aloft, and then cast herself once more upon the ground, uttering scream upon scream, as if impressed with a belief that Mr. St. John's sudden appearance was the result of supernatural agency.

"Fool, what is the meaning of all this incoherent mummerly?" inquired the father, savagely addressing the party before him. "What is the meaning of the extraordinary language I have just heard you use?"

"Forgive me, forgive me!" exclaimed the woman. "Say but the word that you will forgive me, and I will tell you everything."

"Have you anything to tell, then?" inquired Mr. St. John, affecting to appear calm, but fearing, too truly, what might be the nature of the communication in question.

"Indeed—indeed, I have, sir," said the unhappy woman; "but I know you never can forgive the baseness I have practised toward you: it is past human expectation that you should. No, no; I never can expect it; and, without your promise of forgiveness, how could I ever find courage to declare the extent of my own iniquity?"

"You are ill, woman—you are ill. Your mind wanders; and you know not what you say," replied Mr. St. John, passing his hand across his brow, with an air of one who tries to persuade himself of that which he asserts.

"No, no," said the other, "I am not ill; at least, I have no illness except that which my own remorse inflicts upon me—none that should discredit me with you, as one not knowing the charge she fixes on herself. Say but the word, that you will pardon all I have plotted against you, and though you never address another kind word to me through life, I will tell you everything."

For a moment, Mr. St. John appeared to debate within his own mind whether he should grant the pardon sought or not.

Brief was the pause. Muttering to himself, "Of what avail would be my refusal against a woman, and cut off, as we are, from everything human;" then, looking down at the creature who grovelled at his feet, he exclaimed,—

"Speak, woman—speak quickly—speak truly, and take the pardon you desire. Now, then, what have you to say?"

"Then, sir, Miss Nautila is not your child."

"Woman," said Mr. St. John, starting back as if he had been shot, "this is a base fabrication, got up by concert of yourself and Captain Herbert."

"As I live this day, and breathe, sir, it is not. What is Captain Herbert, sir, to me, that I should accuse myself of a whole life of treachery towards you, whose bread I have eaten for years, merely to serve the purpose of Captain Herbert, or captain anybody else? What earthly interest can I take in him, that can ever lead to such a result? And as for Miss Nautila, were I guided in my conduct solely by affection for her, surely, surely, sir, it would be better to leave her the heiress to such accumulated wealth as yours, than deprive her of all such claim. No, sir; if you can believe the word of any one so false and base as

myself, I am moved to make the disclosures by nothing else than the hand of God! Oh, if you knew what agony I have suffered in all those scenes we have come through! If you knew what increased terror death possesses to the minds of those weighed down by a guilty conscience, compared to the ordinary aspect he wears to such as have borne the weariness of life, and are ready to lay down its burden, you would be little surprised at my desiring now to make my peace with heaven and man, cut off, as we are, from the world, and while my confession may still have the merit of not being a death-bed repentance. No, sir, as I hope to be forgiven, and saved at last, Miss Nautila is not your child;—she is the child of your——”

“Breathe not the name of that accursed wretch, woman, unless you would attempt your own destruction. Do you mean—can you dare to tell me that she is only my niece?”

“No more, sir, as I live and breathe.”

“Oh Heaven!” cried Mr. St. John, “support me under this last dreadful blow. Woman! traitoress! hell’s own progeny! tell me this fact—had I a child at all?”

“You had, sir.”

“Did it live?”

“It did.”

“What became of it?”

The woman, at this question, turned aside her head, and wrung her hands, as if unable to give utterance to the truth in answer.

“What became of it, woman?—Speak!” suddenly cried St. John, advancing towards her, as if with some intention of personal violence.

“Spare me!—spare me!” cried she, lifting up her hands towards him. “Give me but time, and I will tell you all. It was turned upon the world, I fear, to perish.”

“Oh, Father of mercy!” groaned Mr. St. John, “can this be true?”

“True as the Blessed Mother, sir,” said the other, pointing to the cross before her. “Its uncle, seeing that it was a boy, and must therefore, deprive him of all chance of the title and estates, sent it by some hand he could depend upon, to be got rid of—to be cast on the wide world; and from that hour to this never tiding of it has come to hand again, and what has become of the poor little fellow Heaven only knows; though if he be in this wicked world, I should know him again among a thousand, for on his left breast is a mark, for all the world like the coronet I once thought he was to wear. These very eyes first saw it, as the doctor gave him into my hands.”

“Where was he sent?”

“I cannot tell, sir.”

“Who was employed to get rid of him?”

“I never knew, sir. A few days after the child was born, you sent

orders that it should be brought to you, and Miss Nautila's father bound me to bring you his child instead of your own. Your life was said to be one likely to prove of very short continuance; I had nothing but poverty or dependence to look to, and if I kept from you the fact of your having a son, a bribe was offered me so large as to mock at all struggles of honesty. I left England, and came to your retreat in America. In all things else, I have been a faithful servant. And now, having obtained your pardon for the base deception I have palmed upon you, I may yet die in peace with my Maker."

"And what, wretched woman, what species of a deathbed have you left for me? To know that I have a son, yet feel that I am for ever severed from him! To find that the object of all my hopes has indeed been granted to me, but that I must not even breathe a prayer ever to have it realized to my knowledge. Oh cursed gold! whom dost thou leave uncorrupted? Oh, hated honours! whom dost thou leave unenvied? And oh, thrice cursed ties of blood! whose heart dost thou leave unwrung? Begone from me, wretch!—sordid, perjured hag!—begone out of my sight. I pardon, but abhor you. Go, take from my detested gold the price of the blood you have betrayed: live on, since live you will, as best you may, but never darken these eyes with your accursed presence more."

"I go, sir—I go," cried the trembling woman, "to pray and bless you for your pardon. And though you thus bitterly and truly upbraid me, I may well rejoice that the confession of my offences against you, has at least spared you the unnecessary misery of obstructing Miss Nautila's happiness."

"Ha!" exclaimed Mr. St. John, starting back, as if suddenly stung by some envenomed serpent, "is it so? is it as I suspect, then? Woman, your artifice is vain; I see plainly it is all as I thought; you, too, are in league with all the rest. This story you have told is a lie from beginning to end. You deny it in vain!—you deny it in vain!" cried he, raising his voice with the utmost shrillness, to drown her protestations. "But your plot shall never succeed. Nautila is my daughter, and no child of mine shall ever be married to that man!"

Stamping on the ground, and giving her a look of the utmost fury, the father, with a degree of rage that might well be attributed to insanity, turned his back upon the suppliant woman, and was soon out of hearing.

CHAPTER LXXXII.

“ He was as gentle-manner'd man
As ever cut a throat—
• • • Resolved and high.”

BYRON.

AGITATED by the terrible emotions which it may easily be supposed would swell the breast of most men on making such a discovery as that we have stated, Mr. St. John pursued his way to the lake below, and seizing the passage-boat, hurried over to the cabin, with some vague intention of seeking Nautila and renewing to her his interdiction of her marriage with Herbert, although he felt convinced it was impossible to add anything stronger than those positive commands he had already uttered on this subject.

Seeing the absolute necessity of rendering as perfect as possible their communication with the shore, Mr. St. John and his companions had, very soon after their arrival at the lake, caused to be unloaded the memorable treasure-boat, and from out of this was taken all the gold—that sadly contested treasure—and a large pit having been dug for it, the whole was committed to the earth to stand the chance of time whether it was ever to be again brought forth to play the tempter to human weakness.

A stake having been driven on the shore of Nautila's island, and another in the land opposite, a cord was fixed across, and a grummet, or collar, traversing this line, was attached to the boat, thus enabling any parties who might have occasion to pass from the island to the shore of the lake without troubling any one to ferry them over.

Availing himself of this accommodation, the old man at once got to the island, and, as we have seen, unnoticed and unperceived, and, little as Nautila imagined that such a thing was possible, overheard every word, or nearly so, of her projected *matrimonio segreto*.

Irritated as he had already been to a state not far distant from perfect frenzy, it may easily be imagined what a fresh accession of rage animated his breast on overhearing these plottings.

Still he allowed no word to break from him at all divulging his

knowledge of their secret, and after revolving all the circumstances in his own mind, he allowed the evening to pass on without any allusion, by which there could be traced the slightest suspicion of his privacy.

With clouded brows, and under various guises, the party once more met at tea. Little being said, this meal passed off. One by one, the different occupants of the common room departed, and old Mr. St. John and Nautila were left alone.

As the hour appointed by her lover drew near, Nautila arose.

"Where are you going, Nautila?" said Mr. St. John.

In an instant, Nautila's face flushed like the carnation, and turning her head on one side, she answered,—

"To take a walk, my dear father."

"With whom?" he demanded sternly.

"To—to—meet Anna Maria and the brigadier," at length said our heroine in reply, there coming luckily to her remembrance the recollection that these two were to be among the most prominent actors in the scene then at hand.

"Is Captain Herbert to be of the party, Nautila?"

"I—I—believe he will be there, sir."

"Then hear what I have to tell you, child. I have already said much to you as to the unfortunate acquaintance you have formed in that quarter, and the utter impossibility of my ever giving my consent to his marriage with a daughter of mine. You well know my immovable resolution on all points. Bear this in mind, my determinations as to such a marriage are unchangeable. Learn, then, as rapidly as you can, to banish from your remembrance, any foolish girl's dreams you may have formed respecting such a connection. I do not say improperly formed, since I was at one time unhappily induced to sanction it as a project. The jargon of the world would teach us that love is ineradicable. The experience of life proves the entire reverse. Act on the hint I give you, and you will yet know happiness. Disobey it—but I will not imagine you can be guilty of such ingratitude. But I interrupted you from addressing yourself to your toilet. You can now return to that duty."

To this exhortation, Nautila replied not a word, turning away with a quiet curtsy, she withdrew to the ladies' apartment, and with a heart obeying a thousand wild emotions of fear, hope, love, joy, and foreboding, proceeded to array herself for the most important event in the life of woman.

Remembering this, it is not surprising that nearly half an hour elapsed before our heroine quitted her chamber for the rendezvous.

Conscious of having arrayed herself with a little more precision than ordinary, for, alas, the nature of the ladies' wardrobe did not, as the brigadier had asserted, offer them much opportunity of delay, Nautila, anxious to avoid the supervision of Mr. St. John, if such a feat were possible, shunned the public sitting-room, and stole quietly down to the ferry.

Arrived here, she found the boat on the further side, and drawing it hastily toward her, got in, and then conveyed herself to the opposite shore, where she landed.

Quite convinced that everything now was to follow exactly as she wished, she hastened towards the appointed place. Herbert, however, was far too gallant a cavalier to allow his mistress to proceed a single step further than was necessary, without an escort.

To have crossed with her to the island would have been imprudent, as likely to excite the suspicion of the father under existing circumstances, but on the moment she reached the island at the path of the wood fringing the lake, our hero, who had been long expecting her, stepped forth, and clasping her trembling hand in his own, steadied her tottering steps towards the agreed point, where Wynn Powell, that "pillar of the church," was to join their hands together in holy matrimony.

In the mean time, how had been employed that singular being, who, from his own bitter experience, seemed to have learned the art of being deceived by no one? Had he allowed his resolute relative to outstrip all his vigilance, and take him by surprise?

In truth, not he!—No sooner had Nautila left his presence, than noiselessly and with rapid steps, he sought the ferry-boat, and transporting himself to the main land, plunged at once into the bush, and remained to see what should happen, knowing full well the errand on which Nautila was bent, and suspecting that Herbert must be close at hand.

That half-hour, which passed so quickly to our heroine adorning her tresses, flew so heavily over the head of her father, tormented with mosquitoes, that he at first imagined some mistake had occurred, and almost felt inclined to return. While he was yet debating this point, however, he beheld the lovely girl steal gently and sweetly to the ferry, draw the boat over the crystal tide, get into it and land within a few paces of where he stood, gaze at the cottage on the island for a few seconds, mutter some words, the import of which was lost to him, breath a deep sigh, and then hurry onward to the place of rendezvous.

Allowing Nautila to get well ahead, the old man proceeded to follow cautiously in her footsteps, perceived Herbert join her at the first turning of the road, and then, as they went on together, he maintained his post of observation in the rear.

Little dreaming that the avenger was so closely behind them—the lovers indulged to the full in the overflowing happiness of their hearts: their joy just sufficiently tinctured with sadness to bring out its brighter points in still stronger relief, they little thought to what an end their steps were conducing. Having speedily gained the appointed spot, they found all the other conspirators assembled, anxiously waiting their arrival; and, certainly, in their bearing as merry as might be;—the brigadier, as a matter of course, heading them all in their merriment.

"Huruish! my boy!" cried the brigadier, tossing his battered cap in the air at the arrival of our friends. "St. Patrick be praised, that you have got away from the old fogie at last! Here have we all been waiting for you in the utmost possible consternation, for fear the old thief might have got wind of the design, and locked up the fairest bride in all creation—as Ebenezer Wire would have said—always and of course excepting and abating my own lady love. However, we have fairly diddled the old boy at last; and now if we don't make up for lost time, no matter! We have just the whole boiling of us christened this place Cape Matrimony. And here's the little Welsh parson, God bless him! as ready to help us to double it as ever one man in this mortal world was ready to help another. So come along, my hearty, shove in your boat, and let us make an end to the business. We are, every man of us, so nervous, the devil of one of us can catch a fish, except old Broadbrim. And as to him, it's my firm belief that if the world were coming to an end this moment, he would still have the conscience to bob a line in the troubled waters; and if by accident he should catch nothing else, he would be sure to catch a flounder. And now, my heart of oak, what sort of a wedding-ring have you got? Haven't I made a beauty from a reglar ould goulden guinea."

So saying, the brigadier produced one of those orient fetters which not even the aqua regia of the ancients can dissolve.

Here Herbert released from his arm Nautila, who at once withdrew to the blushing Anna Maria; while their future lords, with the glee of schoolboys comparing their spinning-tops, or rather, to use a closer simile, their quoits, showed one another the clumsy wedding-rings they had formed from golden coins; while Wynn Powell interrupted their felicitations by remarking,—

"If you are wise men, either of you, you will proceed at once to the accomplishment of this business; for were that wide-awake old fellow in the hut yonder to smell a rat, he'd be down upon us in a quarter less than no time."

Thus recalled to a sense of their situation, the gallant grooms hurried off to their fair brides; and intimating to the quaker that the ceremony was about to begin, they all at once gathered round the little Welsh parson.

Nautila's demeanour was calm and grave, but collected. Anna Maria, on the contrary, was redundant in the hysterical line, and cried most unmercifully. And, under these auspices, Broadbrim having undertaken to officiate as father to both the ladies, as well as clerk to the parson, the impressive ceremony proceeded.

Notwithstanding their late joking, all parties were now fully serious, and some notion of impending ill seemed to affect their minds, though, as no one could tell why this should be, so they each considered themselves as the fools to their own fancy. Just, however, as the ceremony had reached that portion where the

minister demands of the lady, "Wilt thou have this man to be thy wedded husband?" a loud and determined voice interrupted, in answer—"Certainly not."

At those well-known tones, Nautila, almost fainting, grasped the hand of Herbert for support. All further attention to Wynn Powell was suspended; every eye was turned to the spot from whence the interruption proceeded. And there, wrapped in a boat-cloak, his countenance bearing testimony to the emotion that convulsed his frame, was seen Mr. St. John.

CHAPTER LXXXIII.

"He paused a pace, his brow he cross'd,
Then on the board his sword he toss'd."

Lord of the Isles.

THE sudden appearance of Herbert's intended father-in-law took all parties so much by surprise, that no one uttered a word until he had stridden up into the midst of them; then slowly looking round with a degree of contempt which it is difficult to imagine, he exclaimed,—

"I suspected that the clandestine betrayal of my daughter into disobedience of her father's commands was the next consistent step to be taken. Madam," turning to Nautila, "retire instantly to your room."

Herbert made an effort to detain our heroine by the arm; but she was too unused to resist the slightest wish of her supposed parent, to adopt on this occasion the strong course of flying in the face of his authority; and, after a moment's resistance, Herbert yielded to what was evidently her feelings on the subject, and she retired.

Her father waited until her back was fairly turned upon the spot, and then facing round to Herbert, said to the latter,—

"Now, sir, may I crave a few moments' interview with you?" Herbert bowed, and the old man leading the way up to the flag-staff, our hero followed him. When they had attained the platform, Mr. St. John crossed the spot of his daily meditations, and gained a small open space to the right. Standing on which plot of ground

parties might gaze securely on the surrounding ocean without being seen by those in the valley.

The evening, though still quite bright, for the sun had got an hour's fall above the horizon, was yet so far drawing to an end, that it wore that aspect of settled calm so soothing to the heart of man when "day is done;" and chafed as Herbert felt at this interruption of his views and frustration of his hopes, the sea breeze, then setting in, came with delicious freshness on his fevered body. Almost involuntarily he cast around a quick and passing glance, while there arose in his own mind a question so natural to the circumstances.

"Why, alas! while nature on every side showers down her blessings and her beauties, why should man alone refuse to be soothed by them, nor even permit them to form the happiness of others? Surely, shut out from the world as we are, it would not have been too much that we might have been allowed to enjoy in peace the little opportunities of happiness that present themselves. But fate rules otherwise for the present, and to her iron decrees I suppose we must submit."

"Now, Mr. Herbert," said St. John, recalling our hero's attention back to the matter more immediately at hand, and from which it appeared slightly to have wandered; "now we are by ourselves, I have to call upon you, not for any explanation of your conduct, that your conduct itself renders unnecessary. It is impossible, well as I should like to think of you, that any other but one interpretation can be put upon the manner in which you have sought to entice my daughter into disobeying my commands. Before we part then, sir, I have to insist that you give me a solemn pledge, upon your word and honour, that you will, under no circumstances whatever, attempt to renew the effort you have this day made to entrap my child into a secret marriage; touching which I have expressed my disapprobation in the strongest degree, and to which I have told you, more than once, that I never will consent. I had hoped this would have been sufficient to have deterred you from further prosecuting any of those designs which you had before formed; but as this has not been so, I have no alternative for my own peace but to make the formal demand I do. I now wait, sir, for you to pass with me your positive word of honour that you will never again attempt to obtain the hand of my daughter against my consent?"

"I trust, sir," said Herbert evasively, "that when you consider the position in which I now stand with respect to that lady, you will at once withdraw the request you have made."

"I will do nothing of the kind, sir."

"Then I at least trust you will not expect me to give you the pledge you require."

"I shall not only expect it, but I shall insist upon it," said the old man.

"Then, sir," said Herbert very firmly, but with every respect, "if this be the line of conduct you intend to pursue, I must now and for ever decline to give you any such pledge as you require."

The old man remained for some moments anxiously regarding Herbert.

He then said, "Think of it again, sir, before you give me that as your final answer."

"Were I to think of it for ever," was our hero's reply, "it would avail nothing. If I felt myself at liberty to give you the promise you seek, you should not have to ask for it a second time. My reply is final. It would be neither right nor honourable to Miss St. John, nor consistent with the duties I owe to myself, to give any such promise as that you require. I therefore once again decline to do anything of the kind."

"Then, sir," replied Mr. St. John, while his lip quivered, and his face grew pale from conflicting emotions, "large as this island seems, it has already become too small to hold us two; vast as the world may be, it has become too narrow for us both to live in."

As the old man said these words, he threw from beneath his cloak two of the ship's cutlasses, which having hitherto been only required for peaceful purposes, had been for those ends carefully sharpened, in little anticipation by the parties thus grinding them, that they would ever be applied to the sad and irrational purpose for which they were so shortly to be used.

"Choose your own weapon, sir," said the old man, in a voice of sternness that showed Herbert how useless all remonstrance would be. "Choose your own weapon, sir, and let one of us be released from the heavy burden of life."

"And is there no other alternative?" said our hero, mournfully regarding those weapons which he was thus asked to bear against the bosom of one whom he sought to make his near and dear relative. "Is there no alternative but this last and worst appeal?"

"Yes," said the old man, "certainly there is."

"What is it?" anxiously demanded our hero.

"To give up all thoughts of Nautila."

"An alternative? No, sir, that is no alternative; but something worse than the worst result the use of these murderous blades could inflict."

"Oh, sir! if you are *afraid* of them—" said the old man, with one of those sneers which he so well knew impetuous youth can rarely bear.

"I have hardly deserved that word," said Herbert, "from one who possibly, in all human speaking, owes to my exertions the very breath that enables him to utter such a calumny. But, since you have thought fit to breathe it, the blood that is now shed be upon your own head;" and, seizing the first weapon that lay near him Herbert armed himself in his own defence.

Without any reply to that which our hero had so justly urged,

the old man silently lifted from the ground the other weapon, and in a few more seconds both were engaged in mortal combat.

At the first showing there might, perhaps, be some reason to suppose that the advantage lay upon the side of the younger man. This, in reality, however, was not so. Mr. St. John had lived in days during which, far more than the present, it was esteemed requisite, to the reputation of every gentleman, that he should be accounted a fair master of fence; and in this accomplishment, as well as every other, of a finished man of the world, Mr. St. John excelled.

Although it is true that the rude ship's cutlass, used by either party, was far from being the kind of weapon likely to make this advantage most apparent, yet, nevertheless, with one who had given little or no particular heed to this department of self-defence, it was quite sufficient to turn the fortune of the day, and place the issue of the conquest entirely at the option of Mr. St. John.

Unfortunately, each party continued through the contest that mistake as to the other's intentions, which first gave such acrimony to the battle at its rise.

Mr. St. John, possibly because he was sufficiently in the wrong for such a feeling to enter his breast, imagined that Herbert really sought his life, and would take it if within his power; while, still more naturally, Herbert concluded that nothing but the most unnatural desire to deprive him of existence could have induced Mr. St. John to enter into this personal and deadly conflict with one who had, up to the present moment, hazarded his own life to protect that of his assailant and his family.

In this mutual error Herbert fought most determinedly, anxious only, by additional vigour, to gain the mastery of his antagonist, and then subject him to accept a pardon, on condition of his withdrawing his opposition to the marriage; while Mr. St. John, with a very similar feeling, though anxious to spare Herbert to every possible degree, became sensible, from the way in which the battle was going, that it would require all his skill to attain the position he desired.

While they were thus naturally deceiving each other, there ensued a consequence so natural, that none but themselves could have overlooked it; both of them, namely, lost their temper; and the fight assuming the most deadly aspect, a sudden parry of our hero failed in the object it was intended to achieve, and, before he could recover himself, Mr. St. John's keen blade passed through the left breast of our hero, and, covered with blood, he instantly fell to the ground.

The moment the deed was done, that empire which reason appeared to have deserted in the mind of Mr. St. John, while she could yet avert the ill that threatened, was instantly resumed, when all was too late but grief and despair.

Rushing to the fallen and bleeding man, he threw aside the fatal weapon, and in his anxiety to discover whether any hope remained of Herbert surviving, Mr. St. John, in the utmost haste, ripped open the dress of his late foe, and tearing away one after another the coverings that enwrapped the body, laid bare, in the searching light of the still bright evening, the dazzling white breast of Herbert.

Ah ! What then ? What fatal sight, at a single glance, brought home to the agitated bosom of Mr. St. John, that remorse which would have been far more properly felt when first he placed his hand upon the deadly instrument with which we have seen him, but a few seconds since, aiming at the life of one to whom he owed his own existence, the blessing of which he thus repaid ?

What sight on that snowy bosom could he see sufficient to blanch, to its colourless hue, those aged cheeks, which time, solitude, and suffering, had rendered almost inaccessible to emotion ?

Can it be possible that in that glance has been read the last death-warrant of one who had recently accompanied him through so many dangers, sharing, lightening, and, as far as was permitted to him, averting all ? No ; dreadful as this sight must have proved to him, and calculated to embitter all the remaining hours of life, something far worse, some sight still more horrible, some intelligence still more frightful reached him through that channel, which not even he could dispute.

True it was that the wound he had inflicted upon the generous and high-spirited lover of his daughter bore to his frenzied glance the death-warrant of the victim on whom he had inflicted it. True it was that the red current of life was through those murderous lips which his sword had made bubbling and gushing so madly forth from the near but hidden spring of existence, that to witness the catastrophe, and hope to save the sufferer, was impossible. True it was, as its warm and trickled stream dabbled against his hand, it seemed with its mute tongue to cry out **MURDER !**

But not one nor all these horrors combined struck to his soul with half the retribution, the despair, that he felt on recognizing there, close to the gash he had himself inflicted, that singular and coroneted mark by which, in the sacrifice his obstinacy had offered to his pride, he now acknowledged HIS OWN SON !—restored to him, but to be again lost almost on the very instant of his restoration !

CHAPTER LXXXIV

“They raised the bleeding Otho, and the leech
 Forbade all present question, sign, and speech.”

LARA.

ALMOST with the quickness of thought there seemed to flash upon Mr. St. John a thousand minute corroborations of the truth. The speaking likeness of that pallid face, the kindred breathing in those unclosed but senseless eyes, now rapidly glazing beneath the marble hand of “cold obstruction’s apathy,” the tones of voice, and many other matters that before seemed immaterial,—now, when he would have given his own life for some fair ground of excuse, all rose to complete his condemnation, and swell the dreadful amount of his sufferings.

“My son, my son!—my once lost boy Herbert!—my dearest Herbert!—my child!—Herbert, my son!—dear Herbert!—my child!—my heir!—speak, speak, I implore you!—utter but a single sound, to tell me that you live!—draw but one breath, only one single breath, to bid me hope!” cried the wretched father, throwing himself madly beside his child, and vainly endeavouring to stanch the blood that flowed from the wound. Then, as all his entreaties seemed to be of no avail, he cast himself in perfect insanity on the ensanguined grass, rolling and writhing in his agony, and exclaiming, “Oh, Heaven!—oh, Father of all mercies! was this last bitter drop, then, wanting to make my cup of misery flow over?—had I not already endured more than mortal being could support? But, no, no! Heaven cannot purpose to witness or permit such crushing of the writhing worm! No, he cannot be dead!” Then once more throwing himself beside the other, he exclaimed:—“Herbert!—dearest Herbert!—my son!—my only child, awake!—speak, if but one word, to save my heart from breaking! All shall be as you wish. Nautila is not my daughter after all. I no longer oppose your union—speak!—breathe but one word!—oh, it cannot surely be too late!—awake to happiness my dear, dear boy! Wealth—title—honours—joy and felicity of every kind court your acceptance!”

Then, seeing that all his frantic grief availed not to extract a sign of life, the unfortunate old man uttered a piercing cry that could just be interpreted into the sounds, “My son!—my son!”

and in the next moment had fallen senseless on the bleeding body.

Here, but for the watchful care of Broadbrim, would in all probability have ended the tragedy which Mr. St. John's obstinacy had so foolishly commenced; but when the old exile had requested Herbert's attendance, the watchful glance of the quaker had detected a more than usual expression in the father's countenance, and communicating his suspicions to his companions, they determined to follow the retreating footsteps of the suspected pair, in order, if necessary, to interfere.

Unfortunately, they were a little tardy in their proceedings, and, instead of arriving on the ground in time to prevent the mischief they dreaded, they only came to the spot in sufficient haste to witness the, to them, inexplicable conduct of Mr. St. John, and to hear indistinctly those words, which filled them with so much surprise, "My son!—my son!"

Fortunately for Nautila, she was not one of the party; and when the others beheld Herbert lying wounded in the manner we have stated, his care at once engrossed the whole consideration of his friends, for the brigadier and Wynn Powell had, of course, hurried with Broadbrim to the ground of the duel.

Reserving for subsequent explanation the meaning of what they beheld, they tenderly bound up our hero's wound, in the best way they could, and dashing his face with cold water, and administering a few tablespoonfuls of brandy, all their hopes were at length rewarded, by seeing him slowly struggle back to life from the fainting fit in which they found him.

Forbearing to distress him by any question as to what had passed, nor even listening to the reproachful self-condemnation of Mr. St. John, they quietly removed the sufferer to the general cabin, and proceeded to examine the state of his wound. None of them were, in reality, near such good leeches as he through whose intemperate anger this distressing accident had been caused; but, for some time, Mr. St. John's agitation was far too great to allow the others to place the least reliance on the wild delight he manifested at the revival of Herbert, and the omen that he thence drew of his final recovery.

Content to hope for the best, from our hero's return to life, they insisted one and all on his being protected from the overpowering effects of that affection, with which Mr. St. John now seemed determined to hail his newly-found heir.

CHAPTER LXXXV.

“ ‘If I had been to search through the world for a son, I should have wished to find him here,’ said the Baron, laying a huge hand on our hero’s shoulder, while a tear glittered on his veteran cheek.”

Waverley.

IN all probability the reader, whose patience has induced him to accompany the writer to this point of his narrative, has by this time realized, in imagination, the few additions it is in our power to make to our story.

Still, as it would be poor courtesy to requite his forbearance through this volume, with an unceremonious adieu at the last, we will endeavour briefly to narrate those events which, in the island of the refugees, succeeded the eventful day of alarm and trepidation, which thenceforth became chronicled on the memories of all under the title of “the day of gloom.” And this, even at the risk of being able to say no more than all who have perused this volume have surmised beforehand.

However anxious all parties might be to spare Nautila unnecessary pain, it was impossible long to keep from her knowledge the fact of her lover having been dangerously wounded.

All the ladies of the island, on being informed of this disastrous event, rushed with one accord to proffer him their assistance; but dreadful as was to Nautila the shock of seeing him borne bleeding and almost senseless to his couch, even that agony was faint, compared with her bewilderment on witnessing her father throw himself by her lover’s side, and kissing his pale hands, address him by the title of “My murdered son!”

“What!” exclaimed the horrified girl, “have I a brother? and is he thus recovered, thus restored to me?” and turning round to search for that family confidante, from whom alone she well knew she could gain any information on the point, exhausted nature gave way before the keenness of agony, and she fell swooning to the ground.

This was an event, however, for which Mrs. Cerberus was not wholly unprepared, and bearing Nautila tenderly to her room, she there slowly assisted her, at her revival, and then gradually unfolded the truth, that she was but a niece, and not the child, as she had always hitherto supposed, of Mr. St. John.

"Who then is he?" demanded Nautila, drying her eyes, "if he is not my father?"

"That ma'am," said Mrs. Cerberus, "is a question I dare not answer."

"Why not? why should you not tell me who and what I am, and what I have yet to suffer?"

"No, ma'am," said the dependant; "I dare not breathe to you a word that may discover the secret my master chooses to keep upon this point; and for any information you must rely entirely upon him. Some day, I know it is his intention to communicate everything to you; but till the moment when he thinks fit to pursue that course, I am bound by the most solemn oaths, which I dare not violate, to maintain his secret with the utmost tenacity. Of this, however, be certain. Whoever you may be, no one has less cause to blush for her position in life; and, as to future trials, those I trust are all over and vanished, for Heaven has seen fit to afflict your blood with dreadful visitations. This, however, I may as well tell you, your uncle has indeed suffered deeply in every species of family tribulation; and heavy trials, acting on the proudest spirit that ever misled human being, drove him to shut himself from all the rest of the human race, and to view everything and creature alike with suspicion.

"Believing as he does, that a degree of shame attaches to his misfortune, the sore point of his life has existed in the dread of this becoming public, and this doubtless will induce him, to the last, to hold back from your knowledge everything relating to himself. If, therefore, you have the slightest wish to lead him into a confidence on this point, remember the injunction I now give you, and refrain from pressing him for the slightest information. In this manner, perhaps he may very possibly grow to see that you do not think the less of him for learning how deeply he has suffered. Bear also this in mind, that it will be a long day before he ever exhibits towards you the same affection which but a few hours ago he delighted to manifest; do not, however, be distressed at this conduct: from the hand of your father, his only brother, it was, that he received those deep injuries which have driven him from life and society. It is, therefore, very possible that at first a sight of you may recall many of his sufferings; and now that he has found a son and heir to all that he may wish to leave of name or honours, you will not be surprised if the weaker claims of a daughter—much less a niece, soon become obliterated.

"This, however, in time, will all fade away, when he sees you nursing Mr. Herbert, in whom his heart and attention will now be entirely engrossed; you will then rapidly gain back in his affections the place, I doubt not, you have temporarily lost. As for me," continued Mrs. Cerberus, crying bitterly, "I have most keenly to reproach myself at having ill repaid the kindness with which, in his most moody moments, he has always treated me.

Do not ask me, then, to explain to you the particulars I have already acknowledged to him; and the only favour that I now beg is, that you will as rarely as possible require any assistance from my hands that may oblige me to come before him."

Nautila had with patience endured the prosy explanation of Mrs. Cerberus, and, freed from her prolix communications, she now darted off to the couch of our hero, caring little what pangs were in store for her, provided that she might yet be allowed to cherish unchecked that deep and affectionate devotion which had formed the charmed burden of her life.

Scarcely noticing her arrival at the bedside of Herbert Mr. St. John now devoted himself, unremittingly, to the task of restoring to existence the being whom he had so nearly deprived of that most questionable boon and certain onus which we all of us occasionally long to resign, and yet of which we wisely postpone the resignation, till nature herself demands it.

At last the day arrived, when, through the united exertions of nurse and surgeon, Herbert once more arose from his couch, and leaning on the arm of Nautila, proceeded to ramble by the delicious margin of the fairy lake.

Again and again had Mr. St. John been implored, both by his son and the beautiful being who called him cousin, to give some explanation to them as to who they really were. With many a sigh, and often warning the interrogators of the fatal effects of curiosity, the old gentleman constantly postponed the disclosures which they sought, till at last, more pressed than usual, he declared that as soon as their marriage had been solemnized a week, this natural curiosity of the young people should be fully gratified.

It needed not this additional stimulus to Herbert's anxiety thus for ever to prevent Nautila and himself from being again severed, to second, by the most obedient adherence to his physician's orders, every chance in his power to regain his health.

Being for some days too much fatigued by the act of walking to gain from it all the benefit the fresh air was capable of affording, the brigadier, whose hymeneal impatience was quite equal to his own, insisted on forming for him a sort of sling, on which the kind-hearted soldier carried him pickaback up the hill, and then, as soon as they came to the top, where the refreshing breeze of the sea could be inhaled, set him down, thus fully at liberty to enjoy himself to the utmost, without feeling any portion of fatigue which would have been otherwise necessarily consequent on so much exertion.

No wonder that with such care bestowed on him, his recovery rapidly rewarded the exertions of his friends by the fullest return of that ruddy health, of which his father had so nearly deprived him.

Once more, Wynn Powell received instructions to hold himself in readiness for duty; and this time, no interruption was feared from any party. Broadbrim resumed, unreprieved, his office of father to the brides; and the brigadier, with a thousand and one additions to all his old jokes, received, at last, the full reward of all his merits, in the hand of the blushing Anna Maria.

A week had scarcely elapsed from this merry day, when Herbert, one evening, ventured to intrude upon the meditations of Mr. St. John. The latter, who was gazing from the window of his lodge, looked up with an expression that seemed to say, "To what do I owe this visit?"

"I am come, sir," said Herbert, in reply to this mute inquiry, "to remind you of your promise, that within a week of my marriage with Nautila, you would explain to me something of my past history, and permit me to know——"

"I have not forgotten it," said the other; "but as it is too painful a matter for me to narrate to you at length, satisfy your curiosity by reading this account, which I have drawn up for you in writing."

As Mr. St. John said this, he drew from a rude kind of desk, which he had made from some indigenous wood, the document to which we have alluded, and gave it to Herbert to read.

Quickly sitting down at once to peruse what he was so delighted to have offered to him, in a few seconds our hero seemed quite engrossed, by the deep emotion and excitement which the paper called forth, occasionally elevating his brows and moving his lips, as emotions of pity or surprise passed through his bosom. To these traces of external emotion, there once or twice succeeded looks of lively horror; and at last, when the paper was finished, he exclaimed,—

"Well, indeed, sir, might you shrink from reviving the recollection of sorrows so dreadful! Well might you imagine that neither honour nor truth were inmates of the human breast, and shrink from society as from a certain contamination. But I trust your woes and trials have now found a climax, and that you will soon meet with an opportunity of being restored to the world, to resume with increased honour the distinguished post you once held in it. Strange, eventful history, indeed. And so then you are——"

* * * *

The reader, whose kind attention has lasted to the sudden break which ended the preceding narrative, may here feel in the story sufficient curiosity to ask what further befell the personages of our drama.

And that, gentle reader, is just the question which the author would like to ask, himself, could he find any one possessing sufficient information to give a satisfactory answer.

There is an old line which comes greatly to the aid of all romancists :—

“Gadzooks ! must one swear to the truth of a song ?”

We, for our part, certainly will not. The foregoing tale came in a most mysterious manner to our knowledge. One morning, the “London Parcels’ Company” delivered at the gate a small packet, neatly done up in brown paper ; which, on being opened, was found to emanate from that eminent letter-writer and parcel-sender, the celebrated Mr. Nobody. It inclosed a wide-mouthed bottle, bearing in its shape a wondrously strong indication of having once been despatched from the shop of Messrs. Fortnum and Mason. The exterior was, however, curiously incrustated with divers minute shells, and certain particles of sea-weed. The bottle was opened. It comprised a splendid assortment of—preserves, perhaps you will anticipate ? Nothing of the sort ! Its sole contents were a roll of musty papers, written over in a close handwriting, which, being deciphered with considerable difficulty, were found to contain the heads of the foregoing story. Whether the circumstances therein specified ever really did occur—whether they relate to any vessel whatever, or whether this was a mere idle hoax upon “the unfortunate author,” the reader must decide for himself. It will suffice here to remark, that the narrative certainly did amuse one or two idle hours of the writer ; and if it has done the same for his readers, both parties may cry content.



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